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An Application of Psychological Theory to Pronunciation Problems in Second Language Learning

THE importance of accuracy of pronunciation is an aspect of second language learning readily accepted by most educators on a theoretical or "principle" plane, but one which, unfortunately, suffers extremely on the level of applicability and accomplishment.*

That communication on the oral-aural plane is the most efficient and effective of the means available to us is difficult to deny if we consider some of the resources of spoken language beyond the barest germ of meaning transference; the variations possible in timbre, dynamic range, phrasing, pitch, and intonation of the human voice not only augment our stock of linguistic tools, but supply a degree of flexibility, clarity and subtlety often strived for but seldom attained in written communication.

From a pedagogical point of view our evaluation of oral skills should indeed be influenced by the awareness that students who claim proficiency or knowledge of a language outside of classroom circles, will find themselves confronted with a test of oral skill rather than a page of text to translate.

Yet even where recognition of the problem is adequate, as in those schools whose aim is "never to let an incorrect pronunciation go uncorrected," the degree of accuracy achieved is seldom in profitable proportion to the amount of time and effort expended in correcting mistaken pronunciations.

The author firmly believes that an examination of the basic and fundamental problems of human speech production and habituation is required before any definitive solutions may be found. It is with this purpose in mind that the following observations are made: to examine more closely, not the problems of speech production, which have a rather extensive literature, but rather those concerning habituation.

Among the reasons often advanced for the explanation of mal-pronunciation in second

language areas, the physiological difficulties figure prominently. Statements are frequently made concerning the progressive loss of flexibility of the speech organs with the increase in age and its assumed corollary of inherently difficult sounds.¹

Faulty hearing is often blamed for inaccuracies in reproduction, and occasionally the learning situation even begins with the assumption of failure and the presentation of "close English equivalents" as substitutes for the actual speech sounds of the language in question.

There is as yet no empirical evidence from the physiologists to add credence to the idea of the organic origin of the decrease in flexibility or adaptability, and a brief comparative glance at the phonetic patterns of some of the many languages spoken in the world should suffice to destroy the illusion of "inherently difficult" sounds.

The matter of faulty hearing as a cause of mal-pronunciation refers, in the author's opinion, to a real, but seriously oversimplified statement of the problem.

While it is readily acceptable that there is no universality of exact concurrence in the same phonemes produced by different speakers, the very existence of such things as "phonemes," with their occasionally contiguous allophones, forces us to assume a certain minimum level of auditory acuity for the "normal" com-

* An amplification and revision of a paper read at a meeting of the Ohio Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, in Columbus, Ohio, on Oct. 21, 1950.

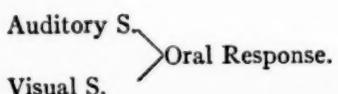
¹ This loss of flexibility does not necessarily involve physiological or anatomical process, or an irreversible one. Within the realm of present day knowledge, it is apparently a learning problem, with the implicit corollaries of modifiability based on learning principles. In dealing with individuals of advanced age, the learning problem is especially marked by motivation difficulties and the operation of the "principle of least effort."

municating members of a speech community. The child in the early stages of language learning does, however, undergo some unconscious modification of his auditory processes, namely, the impetus toward selective perception of those sounds which prove most meaningful and significant in his speech environment, and which will affect his later second language learning behavior.

The converse of this selective perceptivity involves a developing differential insensitivity to those sounds outside the familiar language area. It is not "faulty hearing" which makes it difficult for French students to pronounce the middle vowels, but rather this selective insensitivity which makes these vowels difficult to "hear." What we cannot "hear" we cannot reproduce.

Laying aside for the moment the problems of audition, let us turn to those dealing with reproduction. An examination of the first-language-learning situation reveals that the child moves in a linguistic environment, that is for him, predominantly on the aural-oral level.² For the greater part of his pre-school years all the language training the child receives, both conscious and unconscious, is directed towards establishing his ability to reproduce orally the phonemes of his language. It may be said that his training and practice in the production of significant speech sounds occupies his entire wake-a-day life. That this intensive training is effective is evidenced by the normal level of orally verbal ability seen in the first grade classes of the elementary school. The child communicates orally with both teacher and classmates. Up to this point we may say that the child's training in the linguistic STIMULUS-RESPONSE pattern has been entirely on an auditory level.

It is with the beginning of the school years that we attempt to modify the simplicity of the Auditory Stimulus-Oral Response situation. With the first steps in reading we begin to effect this situation:



Upon the assumption that the Oral Response to the Auditory Stimulus is well fixated, we

proceed to train the child almost exclusively and to an extremely high degree of habit strength, to respond orally to visual stimuli in a given way.

The average High School graduate has had twelve years of intensive training in giving the proper oral response to a given visual symbol: the letter. When presented visually with the letter-symbol *R*, the American responds orally with a lateral continuative; and the rapidity, accuracy and consistency of this response is indeed in keeping with twelve years of reinforcement.

When this student studies a second language, in this case one written in Roman type, he is almost immediately presented with written material and an "explanation" of how to pronounce, let us say, Spanish.

Some teachers loudly bemoan the "perversity" or "innate inability" of the American student who persists in pronouncing a lateral continuant for the letter *R* when he has been shown and told countless times that he must produce a simple alveolar vibrant.

What we are actually dealing with is a situation wherein the student is subjected to the Old Visual Stimulus (*R*) and is expected to produce a New Oral Response (simple alveolar vibrant). A comparison of the amount of reinforced practice in both cases makes the degree of negative transfer readily understandable. Yet barring any organic abnormality, it can be demonstrated that the individual is physiologically capable of producing the desired sound, particularly in a properly motivated imitation or totally aural-oral situation.

In terms of psychological principles, when we have a comparatively weak (in terms of habit strength) response in conflict with a strongly reinforced response, both to be evoked by the same stimulus (in different contexts), the problem consists of how to strengthen the weaker, but "desired" response.

Since the desired response is achievable, but has only low probability of evocation by the Old Visual Stimulus, the New Response can best be strengthened in the absence of this interfering stimulus, and brought to a fairly

² Taking into consideration those gestural and non-linguistic stimuli employed to evoke oral responses in very young children, such as pointing, "pat-a-cake," etc.

high degree of habit strength by the use of non-interfering stimuli, e.g. auditory.

It is only when the New Response has acquired sufficient habit strength, as indexed by the higher probability of occurrence, that we may more efficiently introduce the Visual Stimulus.

While negative transfer will not be completely eliminated in the comparatively short periods available for such training under most contemporary curricula, the practical goal reached for is a *minimization* of this negative transfer.

In terms of practical classroom practice, the suggested technique is the following: maximum training time possible, conducting the class entirely in the new language, using an inductive method with TOTAL ABSENCE of written visual material (reading, dictation), before permitting the students to see any written form of the language; gradual introduction of spelling, i.e., coordination of Visual Stimulus with already strengthened Oral Response by means of non-sense, or isolated non-meaningful syllables; inception of regular reading material, but with continued maintenance of the class in the new language.

The author would like to cite his experience with an elementary Portuguese class as an example of the application of the above mentioned principles.

An entirely oral direct method was employed in the class for a period of two weeks. No text was assigned and the students were cautioned against seeking out any printed material in the language. No dictation was given, nor were notes permitted to be made at any time. The class hour was devoted to vocabulary presentation on the object level, and included those obvious adjectives of characteristics such as color, form and location, leading naturally to distinction between *ser* and *estar*. Class activity consisted, in the beginning, of repeating the instructor's phrases, answering and asking questions of the instructor and classmates, and obeying simple instructions, e.g. *Abra a porta, feche a janela, etc.*

Homework was maintained on this oral level, consisting of the *oral* preparation and practice of a *dissertação oral* based on the previous day's material. The beginning of each hour was devoted to a rapid question-and-

answer review of previously covered material, and then each student in turn came to the front of the room to give his talk. The table at which he stood was covered with the objective realia on which much of the vocabulary was based. The "talk" concerning these items was not only directed to the class, but actually involved their participation, e.g. *Isto é um livro. É um livro azul. Isto é também um livro azul. Os livros são azuis. Eu tenho o livro. O senhor _____ tem o livro* (handing it to Mr. _____). *Agora a senhorita _____ tem o livro* (handing it to Miss _____), etc. The student also asked questions of the class, such as *O que é que tenho na mão?*

The time remaining after the "talks" was given to the introduction and practice of new new material to be embodied in the next day's activity.

At the beginning of the second week, five minutes of each hour were given to the pronunciation of isolated syllables, increasing the number and complexity daily. The non-meaningful syllables displayed few signs of negative transfer, but when the author risked writing *muito* on the blackboard, the resulting pronunciation was *mui-tu*, contrary to the *mülⁿ-tu* which had been accurately pronounced during the preceding week. In view of this, further presentation of actual words was postponed until the end of the second week. Even with the introduction of regular reading and written exercises in the third week, there was no slackening of stress on oral-aural practice.

As far as syllabus coverage was concerned, there was no significant loss of efficiency, for material equivalent to the first six lessons of the textbook had been taught, and the reading and writing exercises of these six lessons were assigned over two days. It must be emphasized, however, that the degree of accuracy of pronunciation achieved by the class was so high as to more than compensate for any slight time loss in covering the initial textbook lessons.

The most significant aspect of the evaluation of the class is, of course, the results observed after the introduction and use of written materials. In spite of the anticipated element of interference, the pronunciation continued as good; it would be termed excellent compared with the author's results in classes of compar-

able size and motivation, but using more common methods. Extremely interesting to note was the fact that the *structure* of the learning situation had been shifted to the point where, in sharp contrast to the common results, the students' pronunciation shortly after the inception of reading practice was much more accurate than their spelling! This brings to mind the usual situation of the poorly-schooled native speaker. Indicative, perhaps, of the degree of fixation of the proper Oral Response, was the comment of one of the students: "I have trouble making my hand write what my mouth is saying." By the end of the quarter these spelling difficulties diminished to the level expected in first quarter language work. Spelling, being the system of rules for coordinating speech sounds with orthography, can be taught on a logical basis; not so with motor-behavior!

It was taken as a mark of major achievement that the Brazilian speech sounds represented orthographically by -o, ā, ão, -al, -el, ch-, -ch-, -s-, r-, -r-, and -te, -de, so frequently a source of difficulty, suffered minimally from negative transfer and resulted in accurate pronunciation, not only in completely orally structured situations, but also in those involving reading aloud.

While the report of results obtained in this class must be interpreted as anecdotal in terms of comparability and control, the degree of success achieved in this application of the psychological principles upon which the method is based was sufficiently high as to warrant a more highly controlled and comparative experiment, which the author will report in the near future.

STANLEY M. SAPON

Ohio State University

Articles for *The Journal* and books for reviewing should be sent to the Managing Editor, Professor Julio del Toro, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Have the German Schools Been Democratized?

EVEN before hostilities had ceased, there was general agreement among those concerned with the problem that the most effective way of "reeducating" the Germans and preventing a resurgence of totalitarianism was to train youth in the ideals and practices of democracy. The leaders of the older generation were morally and politically bankrupt. With the disturbed postwar conditions, it would be difficult, for technical reasons alone, to gain the attention of any considerable number of peasants, factory workers and small tradesmen. It would be even more difficult to convince a distraught, defeated and disillusioned people who were yearning for "the good old times" of the values of democracy. On the other hand, the rising generation was not steeped in the glories of the past; youth was the raw material of the future; the children could be reached, daily and effectively, in the classroom. In their case, at least, there was some hope of extirpating pernicious ideas and replacing them with liberal and humanitarian ideals.

All of the occupying powers, therefore, gave immediate attention to the question of school reform and to the establishment of a democratic educational system. Ten immediate structural changes, constituting a necessary first stage in school reform, were embodied in the quadripartite Control Council Directive issued in June 1947, entitled "Basic Principles for the Democratization of Education in Germany."

The basic principle, stated as point number 1, was "There should be equal educational opportunity for all." The other nine points suggested free tuition and textbooks, compulsory full-time school attendance, emphasis on civic responsibility, promotion of "understanding of and respect for other nations," the provision of educational and vocational guidance, health supervision, more effective teacher training and lay participation in school reform. The word "suggested" is used deliberately, for although directives and orders had to be used during the first year of the occupation, a policy of persuasion

and example was inaugurated as soon as it was at all feasible, since "democracy by its nature cannot be imposed."

Despite this official statement of laudable aims, no uniform educational policy was inaugurated. Each of the Allies developed his own school policies and organized his own school system. The British sought to model their schools on those of England; the French theirs on the schools of France; and the Americans theirs on the schools of the United States. The Russians in the Eastern Zone were even more extreme.

Germany, then, is still a country of various peoples and cultures; the designation *Land* for a region or province is quite accurate. Each *Land* has its own administration, its dialects, its institutions, its traditions and its customs. It also has its own schools. Although the Western powers made certain stipulations as to teacher qualifications, courses of study and textbooks, they were fairly liberal in their recognition of local needs, desires and traditions. This generous attitude was entirely in consonance with the principles of democracy; it has, however, resulted in a multiplicity of educational types and programs, for which Germany was already known.

In general, the three main types of schools in Germany for children of compulsory school age are elementary schools (*Volksschulen*), part-time vocational schools (*Berufsschulen*), and secondary schools (*Hoehere Schulen*). Together they constitute in effect a two-track system, the two tracks being separated administratively and financially. The elementary and secondary school tracks run parallel from the fifth through the eighth school years. Beyond the first four elementary school grades (*Grundschule*), common to all children, less than one-tenth of the pupils enter the secondary-school, more than nine-tenths following the elementary-vocational school track.

In the US Zone the majority of the children, namely 73 per cent, attend eight-year elemen-

tary schools. Enrollment in the part-time vocational schools which follow the elementary schools represents 18 per cent of the total public school enrollment. An additional one per cent are registered at full-time vocational schools. Thus 92 per cent are in the combined elementary-vocational schools track.

The secondary-school track, beginning with the fifth grade and continuing for eight or nine years, leads to the examination granting admission to higher education (*Abitur* or *Reifeprüfung*). In the US Zone seven per cent of all children attending public schools are enrolled in secondary schools. In some *Laender* there are middle schools (*Mittelschulen*) similar to the secondary schools but offering a practical curriculum and enrolling about one per cent of the children. The secondary schools take several distinct forms depending upon varying emphasis on ancient languages, modern languages, or science, each form being a separate type of secondary school.

The most significant fact disclosed by a comparison of the various types of schools is the enormous discrimination between the two tracks in the matter of financial support. In 175 communities it was found that the median expenditure for secondary schools was 580 marks; for elementary schools 165 marks. For vocational schools it was only 80 marks per pupil.

A child privileged, then, to attend the secondary school could expect to have spent on his education three to four times as much per annum as another child of the same age attending the elementary-vocational school track, followed by nine-tenths of the children.

In fact, vocational education has an almost medieval tradition in Germany and a place in the cultural life of the nation quite foreign to American values. Approximately eighty-five per cent of adolescent youth, after finishing their eight years of popular elementary schooling, attend a specialized vocational school on a continuation school basis while learning their trade. They have no opportunity for secondary education. The remaining ten to fifteen per cent split off from the popular elementary school at the beginning of the fifth school year and commence a highly specialized academic training to prepare for the professions. There-

fore the development of popular general education beyond the elementary school for adolescent youth in Germany will be slow and arduous.

German authorities argue that under the apprenticeship system German children are given work experience and training on the job.

Such on-the-job training, under capable masters, for children 15 and 16 years of age, could conceivably far exceed in value any vocational training that the school could give under a formal full-time attendance plan.

This plausible theoretical argument has been questioned, as Dr. W. H. Strevel, Chief of Education Research, points out. There is no conclusive scientific evidence that 15 or 16 is the best age for on-the-job work experience. Actually, a large percentage of adolescents do not receive an ideal work experience, being set to work at menial tasks, having their labor exploited and receiving a rather unsatisfactory liberal education.

Considering the vocational schools as the typical institution of formal education for nine-tenths of German adolescents, apart from work experience features, it is evident that they are only part-time or "continuation school" institutions, operating on a session of four to eight hours per week per child for two or three years. The program to which the child is exposed at school suffers both from insufficient time and a curriculum that is inadequate and narrow in numerous subject areas.

Vocational schools in general have almost no suitable facilities for general education; they are essentially lacking a cultural and citizenship program. Obviously, they are primarily designed to train only one aspect of the economic and social life of an individual, namely the vocational skills.

Another essential factor in German education which has presented a problem to the American Program is religion.

The German school has always had *Religion* as a subject of instruction, the pupils being classified either as Catholic or Evangelical. This arrangement is so deeply rooted in German consciousness that neither the socialist Weimar Republic nor the anti-Christian Nazis dislodged religion from the curriculum. It is especially firmly entrenched in southern Bavaria and in

the Rhineland where the influence of the Church is strong. Oberbayern, which is overwhelmingly Catholic, has definitely voted to retain its "confessional" schools.

It would be a mistake, however, because of this unfortunate religious issue, to consider the Bavarians backward or reactionary. Actually, they are extremely alert, receptive and progressive.

Some of the best schools are to be found in Munich and Nuremberg, and the *Volkshochschule* (adult education movement) is popular. Furthermore, the Bavarian authorities are eager to learn. An entire issue of the Bavarian educational magazine *Schule und Gegenwart*, was devoted to a highly laudatory description of American schools, based on a recent visit of German school officials to the United States.

A third basic factor, particularly vital at this time, is that of financial support. The American Program demands a free education for all in a country where even in prosperous times a school fee was charged and books were not free. To achieve that ideal now is difficult. Some progress, however, has been made.

In three of the four *Laender* in the American Zone there is no longer a tuition fee during the period of compulsory attendance and textbooks are provided free. In one *Land* free tuition extends to all school types and to all levels of the school. However, the fact cannot be overlooked that this is a great burden, especially to the poorer rural communities in an agricultural land like Bavaria.

Under the Education Program, which is only one of the six branches of the Education and Cultural Relations Division of the State Department designed to influence every aspect of German life, laudable progress has been made.

Huge sums have been spent on textbooks, pedagogic libraries, audio-visual equipment, films, charts and illustrative materials to assist German schools. A number of institutes for educational research have been organized; numerous specialists in various fields of education have been sent to Germany as advisers, consultants, lecturers, and permanent officials. Special offices were organized to render specific services.

For example, to assist the Germans in writing new textbooks, developing new curricular ma-

terials, and becoming acquainted with the better techniques of modern democratic education, fourteen Education Service Centers were established. Each center is staffed with a qualified American director and from 7 to 20 German specialists including librarians, translators, editors, and clerical staff. The centers in Stuttgart, Bremen, Munich, Wiesbaden and Berlin issue monthly publications which are distributed to 50,000 educators and interested lay persons.

The substitution of a completely new set of schoolbooks for those used under the Nazis has been one of the major problems of the Education Service. Not only have all proposed textbooks been reviewed but the difficulties of printing and securing supplies of paper and binding materials have been overcome. Emergency textbooks were printed under the auspices of Military Government immediately after the occupation. Usually these were reprints in paper binding of old books or in some instances books with certain words, lines or pictures deleted; they have now been entirely replaced. From year to year there has been a constant improvement in the quality and number of books published. In 1945 only 38,000 volumes were published; in 1948 there were 13,508,224 and in 1949 over 14 million. The total since 1945 amounts to 34,101,441. Significant is the fact, too, that in 1945 26% of the books were rejected whereas in 1949 less than 5% were banned.

Interesting, too, are the efforts to strengthen democracy in education through the introduction of modern equipment. In model classrooms set up by the Education Service, single, adjustable desks have replaced the old cumbersome desks, into which four pupils were squeezed. The single dim overhead ceiling light has given way to fluorescent light; the guillotine type of blackboard has been replaced with blackboards which extend around each room and the walls were painted with light colors to give the classroom a more cheerful atmosphere. Symbolic, as well as practical was the removal of the podium upon which the teacher normally stands to conduct classes, leaving him on a same level with his pupils.

The immensity of the problem has been pointed out by Dr. William L. Wrinkel, Chief

of Educational Research in the Education Branch of HICOG, who has made a careful study of the German schools and will soon issue a detailed report. In a preliminary statement he says: "It must be recognized that fundamental changes in the educational system and program of a country or a large part of a country such as the US Zone of Germany with a population of more than twenty millions, with more than three and a half million students enrolled in the schools and with nearly seventy-five thousand teachers, cannot be achieved in such a short period as has elapsed since the beginning of the program. The most significant trend in German education is the growing realization on the part of teachers of the importance of democratic institutions and democratic practices."

There is no question that progress is being made in the equalization of educational opportunity. The four-year common school program has been extended to six years in one *Land* and in the Berlin Sector; similar provision is being made in another *Land*. Class size has been reduced as well as the number of pupils on part-time attendance. In this connection we must remember that thousands of school buildings were destroyed in whole or part, necessitating two and three sessions in undamaged structures. To replace bombed-out schools some of the most modern types of school buildings have been erected, especially in suburbs of Bremen, Hamburg and Krefeld. An interesting fact in connection with the physical plant is its increased use for community purposes and by parents.

The latter, in fact, are taking a more active interest in school affairs and are assuming a greater degree of responsibility. Significant in this respect is the founding of a Civil Liberties Union in Germany which has given the average citizen more courage in dealing with officials. Three of the *Laender* now have community school committees or school councils; parent councils or parent-teacher associations are rapidly becoming common in Germany.

More stress has been placed on the social studies in the curriculum and a considerable number of new textbooks in this field has appeared. There are, for instance, excellent histories, of the United States, beautifully illus-

trated, supplied by the American authorities. One German history text is so attractive that it is read with avidity even by the parents.

A number of typically American educational procedures, such as child guidance, curriculum reconstruction and the use of standardized tests are becoming more accepted. Increased interest is being shown in educational psychology, educational measurements and research.

It would be unfair, however, to imply that all educational progress is solely due to American influences and that it is entirely new to the Germans. They were the ones, after all, to first establish a system of free compulsory education. It is they, too, who contributed some of the greatest educators like Herbart, Froebel and Kerschensteiner, whose ideas have deeply influenced American educational theory and practice on all levels. Wundt began the field of child psychology and Stern first formulated the intelligence quotient. Almost seventy years ago Froebel, the originator of the Kindergarten, enunciated the theory which is the foundation of all modern school procedures: "All real learning is based on activity."

Not only in educational theory, however, but also in actual practice Germans have made original contributions.

There are various German private schools which are models of progressive and democratic administration. Outstanding among these is the system of Rudolf Steiner Schools. Grounded in the Anthroposophic philosophy, they have as their aim the full development of the native endowment of each child, out of whose capacities the curriculum is developed.

There is no segregation of gifted and subnormal, for abilities vary in kind and degree in different individuals. It is the teacher's duty to discover these abilities and to help unfold them. Since each pupil is given equal opportunity for the development of his capacities, there is no retardation; all progress according to chronological age. The teacher, who knows his pupils intimately, is advanced with them.

Scores and grades are rarely used, but elaborate character descriptions are written out for each pupil. The purely intellectual element is minimized; the artistic aspect is emphasized in every subject. Much is made of music, singing, and eurythmics to develop the imagi-

nation of the child. Boys and girls share the same activities throughout the twelve school years. In the earlier years no printed textbooks are used; each class develops its own textual materials. Later on more formal instruction is introduced in order to prepare those who wish to for the *Abitur* (composite final examination; equivalent to our college entrance) of the public schools. For those children whose parents do not demand the usual formal instruction in religion, a liberal course in Christian ethics is provided. The head of the school, who is not known as "Herr Direktor," is merely the *primus inter pares* on the teachers' council which determines school policies. Teachers are especially prepared for service in these schools. Children of all social strata, backgrounds and religious affiliations are accepted. The tuition fee is low; a large proportion of pupils, from poorer homes, pay little or nothing, being supported by patrons.

It is evident that the Rudolf Steiner School is a fine type of progressive institution with the highest humanitarian ideals and democratic administration. The first one was opened in Stuttgart in 1919. Despite the Nazis and World War II, they have grown. There are now 25 of them in the *Bundesstaat*. Of course, numerically this constitutes an insignificant proportion of a system enrolling a total of three and a half million pupils in the US alone. The Steiner Schools, however, serve as excellent models to German educators to whom no doubt they are more convincing since they are indigenous. In any case they will help to support the efforts of the American Education Program in favorably influencing the German public schools in liberal ideas and practices.

What are the fairest conclusions one can draw from these various facts?

Because of the heterogeneity of the German social, political and cultural structure, the effects of American influence are uneven in different parts of the country. Inertia due to tradition and firmly entrenched cannot be easily overcome. On the whole, the picture is an encouraging one and the American effort can be considered successful. As Dr. Wrinkle expresses it: "It may be said that the trends with reference to German education are wholly favorable and that there has been no reversal of positive trends. This favorable condition, however, must not be interpreted as meaning that the objectives of the Education Program have been achieved to a degree that efforts now may safely be decreased with the assumption that all trends toward improvement in German education will continue indefinitely or lead ultimately to a total realization of the conditions to be desired."

Every intelligent person knows that an educational system cannot be forced upon a people regardless of its advantages. A school organization reflects the civilization in which it functions; to be effective, and acceptable, it must be an outgrowth of the political, social and cultural conditions. In the final analysis, the Germans must work out their own salvation, adopting those features of American educational theory and practice which are consonant with their own traditions and customs. As the latter become more democratic, the schools will approximate American ideals.

THEODORE HUEBENER*

*Director of Foreign Languages
New York City Schools*

* Dr. Huebener has just returned from Germany where he served as a Consultant in Education for the Department of State. [Editor's note.]

Emphasis and Retention as Objectives in Foreign Language Study

IF HIGH school teachers of today expect to have their subjects maintain a respectable status in the school curriculum, they will have to find ways of convincing the public that they are offering worthwhile work in their classes. This is not an easy assignment, and it is difficult to determine the extent to which it can be done successfully. Often evaluations of this type of instruction cannot be made until the pupil has become an adult, and then it is practically impossible to separate out the many other factors that by then have entered into the experience of the individual. When adults think of their high school courses, they usually try to recall specific details of content and, when finding these rather vague, may conclude that they have derived little or no value from the subjects studied twenty or more years ago.

Every academic subject in the curriculum has its attackers and its supporters. The individuals who attack are convinced that the efforts expended in studying have largely been wasted. Rightly or wrongly, these individuals are usually of the opinion that it would have been better to have studied some other subjects.

It is difficult to estimate the carry-over value of a high school course, for any evaluation of such a factor must be subjective to a high degree. Recollections of a course are more often of the teacher and her personality than of the material which she taught. Individuals sometimes remember the dull, ineffective teacher more readily than the enthusiastic, effective one. This type of association may well determine the permanent attitude of the individual toward that subject. The fact that the subject was either pleasant or unpleasant to the individual becomes the basis on which the course is evaluated.

Adults who have studied foreign languages, or any other skill subjects in the curriculum, may be disappointed when they realize that they have lost some of the ability acquired during years of study. The disappointment may

result largely from two factors: the placement of emphasis by teachers in areas in which the student had little interest, and the students' lack of familiarity with practices which could have aided them in retaining the skill acquired at some earlier time.

Teachers must constantly keep in mind the significance of attitude toward the work in the classroom. Umstattd enumerates several effective procedures which will stimulate wholesome pupil activity, a factor closely related to attitude and to successful learning. Among those mentioned, three stand out especially:

Make the work of the school worthwhile.

Convince the pupil that the work is worthwhile.

Help the pupil to keep his bearings.¹

Attitudes developed in the classroom often continue with pupils into later life. If the pupil enjoys his work in a foreign language class and is convinced that the work is worthwhile, there is a strong probability that even years later his recollections of this course will be pleasant. This assumption of course presupposes that the values which the pupil has been led to accept are worthwhile and are such as will extend beyond the immediate present. For this reason the teacher must assume some responsibility for assisting the pupil in effecting practices which will tend to extend such values into future years.

With the shifting of enrollments in foreign languages, teachers often become concerned as to the future of their classes. As a result of this, they encourage enrollment and then are confronted with the problem of developing wholesome attitudes on the part of students who may have little immediate interest in the language course. Such situations are real challenges to any teacher, but they are not impossible of solution. Good teaching is the best approach. Pupils have a right to expect good teaching at

¹ J. G. Umstattd, *Secondary School Teaching*, Ginn and Company, 1944, p. 124.

all times; they have a right to expect it even more when an inducement has been made to enroll them in a course.

The writer believes that teachers should not hesitate to be salesmen of their products if they believe in the value of what they have to offer, and if they further believe that the pupils who enroll will profit from the course. Pupils need to know the values which they can obtain from a course in order to make intelligent decisions as to enrollment in courses. No teacher should ever assume responsibility for such a decision; it is the teacher's responsibility to make the class worthwhile after the pupil has enrolled. Pupils are severe critics when they become aware that a course has been misrepresented.

Objectives in a course need to be understood and accepted by both teacher and pupils to make the course truly successful. When objectives have been determined there may be need for weighing the emphasis that is to be placed upon each objective. This emphasis may vary according to the needs of the pupils, for some choice should be left to the individual as to the degree to which a particular ability is to be developed.

In modern language classes teachers normally expect their pupils to develop abilities in the four areas of reading, speaking, understanding, and writing. Along with the acquisition of these skills, there will be other objectives for the classes, such as clearer understandings of cultural backgrounds. An approach of this type should aid in the development of desirable attitudes toward other peoples, especially those whose language is being studied. The teacher naturally plays a responsible role in the selection of all major objectives, but the pupil should have some voice in determining the emphasis that is to be given to a particular ability area. His interests must be given consideration.

Pupils often have definite reasons for wanting to study a foreign language, reasons which teachers may fail to recognize or appreciate. There are pupils who may wish to speak a language in order to use it for travel purposes; others may wish to use it for reading or study. A high degree of skill in all four ability areas is naturally desirable, but when this is not possible because of the limitations of time, a choice

of emphasis must be made. In many instances only two years of a language are offered in a school. A choice of emphasis does not mean that the other ability areas need be neglected, but it should give the pupil some freedom of choice as to the area which he wishes to emphasize in that limited time.

A pupil's choice of emphasis certainly warrants the respect of the teacher. The writer recalls an instance in a second-year foreign language class when a pupil indicated that his major interest was to learn to read the language for study and research. He requested permission to do his extensive reading in scientific German, for he expected to continue his education in the field of science. Without hesitation this pupil selected material which had not been edited for classroom use. His progress was remarkable, largely because he supplied his own motivation; he knew what he wanted to do and why. Although the boy gave considerable attention to this phase of his study, he was a regular and ready participant in the daily class work which included conversation, intensive reading, and writing. Actually the teacher had to expend very little additional time to guide the pupil in the self-selected activity. In this course class time was set aside regularly to permit pupils to work on the activity which they wished to emphasize. A boy who was interested in writing used this time to carry on his correspondence with a student abroad; several girls worked on a plan to develop their conversation further. Pupil interests and pupil needs can become significant factors in classroom planning.

Teachers are often so intent upon developing ability in speaking, reading, and writing a foreign language that they overlook the teaching of practices which could aid in the retention of the skills which are being acquired. The individual frequently loses the practical use of the content material of a subject because of infrequent opportunity to apply it or to use it regularly. It is possible to retain much of the content material of a subject by periodic review; but since reading and speaking a language involve the development of skills, both are difficult to retain. The ability to speak a foreign language disappears more rapidly than the ability to read and understand it. Thus the former skill must be practiced with consider-

able regularity if it is to be kept functional.

It is possible for an individual to set up practices which will assist with the retention of language skills. It is obvious to anyone that to retain reading ability it is necessary to read, but the selection of appropriate reading material is no small factor in assuring success in such a practice. To struggle laboriously through uninteresting or overly difficult material is scarcely worth the effort; in such a practice attention is usually focused on the reading of words rather than on comprehension of content. For enjoyment the reader needs to lose himself so fully in the content material that he forgets that he is reading words in another language. The desire to follow the content should carry the reader's attention unconsciously across the page. For this reason, the individual who wishes to retain his reading skill of a foreign language should supply himself with reading material in which he has a live interest. Those individuals who retain their reading skill are probably those who read with interest and not from a sense of duty. Foreign language material which requires intensive concentration should find a place in the reading pattern of any individual, but the reader should also experience the pleasure of including material of a less serious nature. Such a dual practice carried on in a foreign language may well tend to establish a balanced and appreciative attitude toward that language.

Many teachers are achieving excellent results today in developing ability in speaking a foreign language. Pupils learn to speak freely and easily with each other in a new tongue. Everyone knows that speaking must be practiced if it is to be retained. In a foreign language there is not always opportunity for this, for it may be quite difficult to provide natural facilities for such a practice. Informal conversation is an ideal way to develop such an ability; however, when this is not possible, an individual may be able to carry on practices which may help him develop as well as retain his speaking skill. In one such practice the individual may relate aloud to himself an experience which he has had, or he may review some article which he has read. It is not uncommon for individuals to fashion their thoughts along such lines. With a little effort such thoughts can be directed into

a channel where a foreign language can be used as a medium of thinking. If the individual is alone where he can speak his thoughts aloud, so much the better. An imaginary dialog may even be conducted in this manner. We often imagine the conversation of two or more individuals; why not let these imaginative individuals speak through our minds and lips in the medium of the foreign tongue. It must be understood that this is only a vicarious experience, which cannot be expected to have the range and stimulation of a normal conversation. But even this one-track approach may help to bridge the gap between the times when a foreign language can be used as a normal means of communication between individuals. If speaking ability can be retained, understanding will be no problem, for the former is lost more rapidly than the latter.

Writing ability can be retained simply by practice. Since it usually involves only one individual, it is not difficult to create conditions under which it may be practiced. The writing of a diary, for example, can set up a pattern which can provide daily practice. Correspondence in a foreign language is a natural situation which almost any individual will find it possible to establish with little difficulty. Here, as in the fields of speaking and reading, regularity is a determining factor in the success of the project.

Few individuals who retain the ability to use a foreign language believe that the study of that language has been a waste of time or effort. For this reason the individuals who elect to study a foreign language have the right to expect that teachers train them in such practices as will aid in the retention and development of that language in later life. Teachers have too often been guilty of hoping that their pupils would continue to use a foreign language, even when there was little if any natural motivation to do so after they left school. Most language students find opportunity sometime to use their knowledge of a foreign tongue in either travel, business, or study. When they enjoy such an experience, they seldom question the value of their past training in a language. The ability to read or speak a foreign language when the need or opportunity arises is really the most exacting type of test which

any course in the high school curriculum can offer. Few other traditional subjects can offer experiences more satisfying or rewarding than this.

Subjects are continually being modified to meet the needs of individuals. For some mathematics students the traditional courses of algebra and geometry are being replaced by general or applied mathematics. Foreign language teachers must likewise recognize that the needs of their pupils will differ. Teachers must accept responsibility for meeting these needs and for training their pupils in practices whereby the latter can retain the skills and abilities which many of them develop to a functional degree in

high school. If this responsibility is accepted and satisfactorily met, the individuals who have studied foreign languages will undoubtedly become the best sellers of foreign languages in our schools. America needs students of foreign languages who know and are convinced that the learning of one or more foreign languages is worthwhile. Accurate communication becomes a "must" in the first step toward sympathetic cooperation between the peoples of the world. International problems cannot be solved unless people can communicate and understand each other.

GILBERT C. KETTELKAMP

University of Illinois

The third Revised Edition of *Vocational Opportunities for Modern Foreign Language Students*, prepared by Dr. Theodore Huebener, may be obtained at 30 cents each, postpaid, from the Business Manager of *The Journal*, Mr. Stephen L. Pitcher, 7144 Washington Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri.

Techniques for the Teaching of Listening

IN A study entitled "The Importance of Listening Ability" (*English Journal*, October, 1928) Paul T. Rankin reports that an average adult spends 70 per cent of his total waking time in some form of communication, listening ranking first, talking second, reading third, and writing fourth. To be sure, frequency of use is not a sole determiner for including or emphasizing a subject in the curriculum, yet it does seem important and worthy of more consideration than it has received in the language arts field. There is no doubt that the expediency of World War II has been responsible, in great part, for the healthy increase in the amount of talk about listening comprehension, i.e., learning through listening to speakers in life situations in which visual and oral aspects of language complement and reinforce each other in the mode of presentation. Such articles as "Why Not Teach Listening?" "Teaching the Art of Listening," and "Parallels in Teaching Students To Listen and To Read," indicate a growing awareness of the problem.

In an attempt to show how the aural goal may be attained in modern-language teaching, I am calling attention to some lines of study which have been fruitful during recent years; and I am offering in this article a recapitulation of suggestions made by experienced instructors on techniques and devices by which students may secure practice in hearing the foreign language spoken. Considerable attention has been given to mechanical devices, while occasionally attempts have been made and are being made to teach aural comprehension by means of teacher-made techniques. I shall limit the discussion in so far as is possible to purely receptive work, meaning exercises which do not call for any verbal responses on the part of the student.

We may recognize *a priori* that the ability to understand a foreign language when it is spoken by another person is quite separate and distinct from the ability to read and most assuredly to speak it. It is quite common for students to develop a high degree of reading and

even speaking ability, and still be completely at a loss in the presence of someone who speaks the language fluently.

The language teacher who sets up an aural objective is immediately confronted with the traditional and yet fascinating problem of providing a good listening climate and of creating classroom situations in which aural skill may be acquired in an intelligent, purposeful, and effective manner. After the first few weeks students understand quite thoroughly the foreign equivalents for the usual classroom commands, and the conscientious teacher finds himself seeking appropriate instructional materials and interest-compelling devices affording to students practice in understanding spoken language. An interesting technique for introducing "new material orally in Spanish and with a real incentive for student effort at mastery" is explained by William E. Moxley in *Hispania* (August, 1948). Mr. Moxley calls his idea *El Misterio*. According to this technique the students are informed that on the following day a series of instructions will be read to them in Spanish at the beginning of the hour. These instructions are written with and based upon the new vocabulary found in the lessons comprising the week's assignment. The instructor reads the material in Spanish at normal speaking rate once each day during the entire week.

El Misterio contains instructions or clues for three students. The first three students who understand the spoken Spanish and who carry out the orders and commands are the winners for the week. The following week a new and different set of instructions based on another unit of work is presented to the class. The agreement is made that a three-time winner, that is, any student who solves one of the clues three different weeks will receive an appropriate award and will not compete in this particular contest for the remainder of the term.

A technique that will appeal to younger students (and those young in spirit) is that of "listening games" like *Grandmother's Trunk*. The first student states that in the trunk are

"books." The second student repeats "books" and adds an item. The third student repeats the two words in the proper order and adds his word. The object is to remember the proper sequence, to pronounce distinctly, and to listen accurately. Progression may come through changing from the verbal level to that of action as described by Mr. Moxley.

One of the most valuable and most readily available exercises in aural comprehension is that described by George A. C. Scherer in "Reading German with Eye and Ear" (*Modern Language Journal*, March, 1948). Dr. Scherer suggests reading by the teacher of the texts assigned, either with change, or first as they appear in the textbooks, which the students keep closed, and then checking for comprehension.

For a number of years foreign-language phonograph records have been used by many students and teachers of languages. These have the advantage of being willing to repeat patiently time after time; they also make it possible to purchase several records, each produced by a different speaker. It is also possible to secure by way of phonograph records a direct contact with actual natives of the foreign country, and thus to compensate for the shortcomings frequently found in the speech of native Americans. Even if the teacher speaks perfectly this is all the more reason for practicing the art of listening to someone else. In the foreign country few people will be encountered who take pains to enunciate carefully and yet they must be understood. Hence it is necessary to be able to understand careless speech in the foreign tongue as well as perfect or correct speech.

During World War II both the Army and Navy relied heavily on records in their language-training programs, and both reported splendid results. The records actually used by the Army now are being sold to civilians as the Henry Holt Spoken Language Series. These discs utilize a new method developed by the American Council of Learned Societies—a method known as spaced repetition. A sentence is first separated into short sections. After the native speaker pronounces a phrase, the record tracks silently, affording the listener a chance to repeat each phrase for himself. When all the parts

have been thus presented, the complete sentence is reassembled.

The language records in widest circulation are undoubtedly those of the Linguaphone label. Other available language record courses include Decca's Spanish Course, WOR Spanish Language Records, Sonodisc, New World Spanish Course on RCA Victor Records, Cortinaphone, and the Banks Upshaw recordings.

However, a listening lesson using phonograph records can be a disappointing experience unless the teacher has made the most meticulous preparation. Not only must the machine be ready to work but the minds of the students as well, through an interest previously aroused. My experience is that students will listen more expectantly to find the answer to definite questions that have been placed on the board. After the recording session the teacher may ask the students to place on the board a list of key words and idioms.

A variant in the use of records is discussed in *Hispania* (May, 1944). Miss Bee Grabske recommends that the *viva voce* instruction of the teacher be supplemented by recordings which repeat thousands of words in all sorts of combinations, repeated many, many times. She proposes that native Spanish-speaking people read the collected conversations into the recording machine. Victrola and radio are suggested for providing the endless repetition needed. Such repetition necessitates hearing the same record many times and also hearing the same material manipulated in every possible combination, as is done in life. "An efficient system of broadcasting the records will have to be developed," Miss Grabske tells us.

Radio programs in foreign languages, especially short-wave broadcasts, provide that diversity of listening experiences without which a student's aural comprehension of the spoken language remains incomplete. Although the radio offers many of the same advantages as the phonograph, and some additional ones, it does involve the difficulty that the program cannot be predicted, controlled, or adapted at will to the needs of particular schools and classes. Yet admittedly the possibilities of further use of the radio as a means of instruction by foreign-language teachers are as yet unfathomed. John T. Waterman's article in the *Modern Language*

Forum (September, 1945) favors listening sessions of foreign-language classes or clubs, and securing recordings made of foreign broadcasts by the International Division of NBC or CBS.

To Jennie Shipman we are indebted for a listening technique involving broadcasts which develop understanding of other nations and cultures. In "Another Experiment in Foreign Language Broadcasts" (*Modern Language Journal*, November, 1941) she informs us that the Chicago Association of Romance Language Teachers and the Board of Education gave broadcasts over station WHIP in Romance languages on the culture of France, Italy, Spain and Latin America. She adds that a handbook containing a résumé of each program and a vocabulary consisting of words used in the broadcast was available to classes and groups listening in.

An audio-teaching device which does not exclude the permanent disc recording, but which certainly can supplement it, is the Mirophone. For one minute or longer the machine records with a magnetic needle the spoken words on a continuous steel tape. Then when the switch is turned, the machine plays back the last recording made. As the new material is recorded, all the old is removed from the tape. Pauline E. Changnon and Gilbert C. Kettelkamp tell us how the Mirophone was used by the French and German classes in the University of Illinois High School. The Mirophone was turned on as the teacher was explaining, and the words of the teacher were "mirrored." This explanation was then reproduced so that the pupils could become familiar with this new type of reproduction and have an opportunity of hearing the explanation repeated. The Mirophone was used to record individual students' pronunciation and inflection and to record question-and-answer drills between teacher and class.

In the *Modern Language Journal* (May, 1947) George A. C. Scherer describes various uses he made of the wire recorder over a five-month period of experimentation. Outstanding among these informal experiments, conducted with students of German, were having the students read a few lines into a portable microphone which was passed about the room, playing back the recording for self-criticism, retelling in German the content of a novel, conferring with individual students reporting on their German

readings, recording voices other than the teacher's to broaden students' listening experience. Also of interest is the implication that the wire recorder offers a solution to teachers interested in oral-aural examinations and to the teacher who might want to record a whole class session for later scrutiny or examination.

Foreign-language shorts, newsreels and even full-length sound pictures constitute additional means of training the ear. In the field of Spanish there are interesting teaching films like "Tierra Mexicana," "Buenos Días, Carmelita," and "A Cloud in the Sky." Also worthy of mention is Disney with his "Saludos Amigos," in which his well-known animals speak Spanish. We may state that students who have read the script before seeing the moving picture raise their degree of aural comprehension.

It is no longer venturesome to say that as television improves and the number of stations increases, more and more classes may listen and go sight-seeing simultaneously within the school. Television networks may supplement language instruction by bringing the sights and sounds of current events in other lands right into the classroom.

The method of utilization of the phonograph, radio, Mirophone, wire recorder, moving pictures, and we may add television, varies according to the group of students listening. For beginning students, it suffices to be receptive to the spoken language. Intermediate students can be asked to write down words and phrases, while more advanced students can summarize content of programs at the end of the period.

We insist that there is need for greater awareness, on the part of all teachers and other educational workers, not only of the increasing amount of listening today but of the tremendous impact of the spoken word; and we maintain that speaking and, by all means, understanding speech are valuable and desirable skills in foreign-language learning. But until our tests reflect the emphasis of our teaching in proportion to our aims, we have yet to prove that oral-aural instruction is an effective approach to reading and writing.

Miss Lilian Stroebe suggests that foreign-language records be used to test aural comprehension. She proposes examination records having several selections in the foreign language, providing for dictation, translation into Eng-

lish, and summarizing in English. She also recommends records having two selections in two or three different speeds on the record.

The University of Chicago Investigation of the Teaching of a Second Language tests aural comprehension by using spoken material on phonograph records, thus assuring provision of native speech at standardized speed. The tests are designed for use at two levels: the Lower Level (fifteen-hundred basic words) and the Upper Level (three-thousand basic words). Equipped with test booklets offering multiple-choice responses in English, students answer the test by marking a choice corresponding to what they have understood.

Walter V. Kaulfers, also a pioneer in the development of aural testing, points out that growing American participation in world affairs calls for placing emphasis on understanding and speaking a foreign language, although not to the neglect of reading and writing. His test (*Modern Language Journal*, February, 1944) to measure progress in the new-type program is based on the oral reading of questions and statements by the examiner, with multiple-choice answers in English to be marked by the person being examined.

The present writer would add to the existing testing devices a measure¹ of aural comprehension that is easy to administer and readily scorable from a key. Since we admit the desirability of aural vocabulary testing, Part I contains spoken material consisting of 50 isolated words (selected from Keniston's *Standard List*), each of which the teacher pronounces twice in succession. The student indicates that he understands the test word by selecting his answer from five printed Spanish words or phrases, one of which is closely associated in meaning with the word pronounced. In Part II the examinee, after listening to a sentence twice, completes statements like "el mes de sólo 28 días es . . ." by choosing the right answer from (1) diciembre (2) febrero (3) marzo (4) abril (5) mayo. A variation of this completion procedure is the following: the examiner reads 25 statements in Spanish, each defining some object, person, or action. After listening to a definition twice, the student identifies what has been defined by underlining one of five possibilities indicated in Spanish. Large-scale experiments with testing vocabulary aurally, and testing

ability to complete sentences and ability to identify statements show that students with listening experience such as that of attending foreign pictures and listening to foreign broadcasts make higher scores than those who do not engage in aural activities.

The methods of testing ability to listen are endless. Others might be mentioned. Dictation, for example, may be said to constitute a valuable test of listening skill. Also the pronouncing of foreign language questions, to be answered either in the foreign language or the vernacular, is valuable and interesting, never failing "to bring forth students' own attention." If controlled as to vocabulary and if comprehensive in difficulty, *True and False* may be considered a satisfactory measurement of aural comprehension.

Obviously teaching students to listen purposefully, accurately, critically, and responsively, has been the subject of not a little study and experiment. It seems reasonable to expect that from all this ferment of experiment and trial there must presently emerge a concerted effort to pay greater attention to oral language and particularly to the ability to comprehend oral language. This important element of learning a foreign language primarily through hearing would be revolutionary in effect if we could introduce and maintain it. For a certainty, it would reverse the present situation whereby the emphasis on the four language arts in the school, as measured by the relative time allotments, is inversely proportional to the frequency in their use in life. And withal, placing emphasis on listening comprehension is one way by which we can follow the recommendation found in Johann Amos Comenius' *The Great Didactic*:

"All languages are easier to learn by practice than from rules. That is to say, by *hearing*, re-reading, copying, imitating with hand and tongue, and doing all these as frequently as possible."

EDNA LUE FURNESS

*The University of Wyoming
Laramie, Wyoming*

¹ This test is now published as the *Furness Test of Aural Comprehension in Spanish*, Banks Upshaw and Company, Dallas, Texas, 1945. Available in two forms (A and B), the test consists of three parts: I, Vocabulary, II, Completion, and III, Identification. Form C in this series is now available as a recording.

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Le Grand Meaulnes

HAVELOCK ELLIS, in the introduction to the English translation of *Le Grand Meaulnes*, puts any except the most laudatory critic of that novel into difficulties by saying that "there are people to whom [it] seems a simple and insignificant story, just as there are people who inhale in vain the most exquisite fragrance of flowers, or . . . find trivial the music of Mozart."¹ In the same way André Rousseaux calls Fournier's book a "miracle fragile"² and this opinion is reflected in most French critics.³ Now *Le Grand Meaulnes* has always struck me as being far from a masterpiece and, indeed, as a poor book. This opinion clearly leaves me open to the charge of Philistinism; yet my objections to *Le Grand Meaulnes* stem, I hope, not from my own insensitivity but from what seem to be readily demonstrable flaws in the book itself.

Most novels, if they are to have any claim to serious consideration as works of art, must be about credible events that happen to apparently real people. Not that the novel must necessarily be "realistic" in the narrow sense; but it must be convincing. I should rule out *d'Urfé* but not *Gil Blas* or even *La Nouvelle Héloëse*. The events that take place in the book may have the epic grandeur of those in *War and Peace* or they may be mostly insignificant as in the novels of Elizabeth Bowen; but if the writer has tried to counterfeit reality the events must be coherent, and they must have repercussions upon the characters of the book who will then react in a way which the reader feels to be plausible and commensurate with the force of those events. The aesthetic value of the novel will then be proportionate to the logical consistency of the action and the psychological congruity of the characters' reactions, provided that to these is added the technical skill in style and construction which is the *sine qua non* of artistic communication.

A novel may, of course, make no attempt to re-create a recognizable or believable world; this is the case with Cocteau's *Les Enfants terribles*, for example or Valéry's *M. Teste*.

Such books must be judged from a point of view entirely different from that applicable to the more conventional kind of novel. But in the case of *Le Grand Meaulnes*, as will be seen later, Fournier intended to re-create and then to transfigure certain aspects of reality, and it is my argument that he has failed. Not only are his people the merest puppets (this too will be demonstrated in the course of the paper) but the action of the novel is so wildly improbable that one cannot take it seriously. The extent to which this is true will be seen from the following summary:

The hero of the story is Augustin Meaulnes, called "le grand Meaulnes" by his school-fellows at Sainte-Agathe because he is almost eighteen and stronger than they. On a day when he has escaped from the *lycée* and borrowed a horse and trap to do an errand, he misses the road, loses the horse, and by a series of misadventures comes at last to a ruined château where a *fête* is in progress. The celebration is for the approaching marriage of the son of the *châtelain*, Frantz de Galais. Meaulnes meets and exchanges a few words with Frantz's sister, Yvonne de Galais, falls in love with her,

¹ Preface to *The Wanderer*, Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1928, p. xxvii.

² *Littérature du vingtième siècle*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1938, I, 111-112. Cf. Lalou, René, *Histoire de la littérature française contemporaine*, Paris, Presses universitaires, 1946, II, 545.

³ A vigorous dissenting opinion was entered by Gustave Lanson in *Le Matin* when *LGM* was first published; "Cette fantaisie . . . est d'une invraisemblance d'autant plus choquante que ce conte bleu qui devait se passer dans un pays de rêve, hors du temps, prétend s'insérer dans la vie réelle et contemporaine." (Henri Gillet, *Alain-Fournier*, Paris, Emile-Paul frères, 1925, p. 333.) This is the harshest criticism of the book known to me, but Henri Clouard also takes a far calmer view of *LGM* than does the *coterie* of Fournier enthusiasts. See *Histoire de la littérature française du symbolisme à nos jours*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1949, II, 83-84. Claude-Edmonde Magny in *Histoire du roman français depuis 1918* (Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1950, I, 250) makes in passing a cryptic comparison between *LGM* and *Gone With the Wind* from which it is not possible to determine her opinion of Fournier's book except by her associating it with Margaret Mitchell's.

and is compelled to leave her again when Frantz arrives saying that at the last moment his fiancée has refused marry him, and that the *fête* is at an end. Meaulnes is returned to Sainte-Agathe in the dark, and upon his arrival realizes that he has no idea how to find the château again. It becomes for him the country of dreams; he calls it the Domain and makes plans to hunt for it in the spring with his friend Seurel.

During the course of the winter two vagabonds appear in the town, the younger of whom comes to classes in the *lycée*. He presently turns out to be Frantz de Galais, who, having tried to commit suicide and failed, has taken to the road. He tells Meaulnes that Yvonne is to be found in Paris, and after exacting an oath from him and from Seurel that when they hear a certain whistle they will drop everything and come to his aid, Frantz de Galais and his companion disappear from town. In the spring Meaulnes goes to Paris to find Yvonne. After sitting disconsolately in front of her house for weeks, he is told by a girl called Valentine Blondeau that Yvonne is married. Later Seurel, on a visit to relatives, finds the Domain and learns that Yvonne, unmarried, still lives there with her father. He finds Meaulnes at his mother's home, persuades him to meet Yvonne de Galais, and seeing them safely married at last, considers the whole adventure at an end.

But on the very day of the wedding Frantz appears, whistles the agreed call, and Meaulnes leaves his new wife to help Frantz find his lost fiancée. Within a year Yvonne has died in giving birth to a daughter and is shortly followed by her father. Seurel becomes fosterfather of the child. He discovers Meaulnes' diary from which he learns that Valentine Blondeau, who had been Meaulnes' mistress, is also Frantz's lost fiancée, and that she has disappeared again on learning of Meaulnes' marriage to Yvonne. Hence Meaulnes had felt duty-bound to help Frantz search for her. Meaulnes reappears at last, bringing with him Frantz and Valentine, and leaving Seurel to "imagine him at night, wrapping his daughter in his cloak, and setting out with her for new adventures."⁴

Stripped of its stylistic draperies, the plot of *Le Grand Meaulnes* is here revealed for what it is—a creaking collection of old tricks. The

coincidences which are responsible for the Valentine episode are of a kind which no serious novelist since Dickens has dared to use. The oath sworn by Seurel and Meaulnes (which cannot fail to remind one of *Tom Sawyer*) is preposterous enough when one considers the age of Meaulnes and Frantz; but Frantz's whistle on the day of the wedding, like a thin, shrill echo from *Hernani*, reduces the fantastic to the absurd.

The rusty squeaks of the plot machinery are aggravated by the unsoundness of Fournier's primary assumption. This is that in late adolescence one idealizes the simplicity and purity of childhood and seeks to return to it, impelled by the last, glimmering memories of "the clouds of glory." Thus Meaulnes finds in the Domain a land of heart's desire not only because of Yvonne, but because the guests were, by Frantz's wish, children and old people, the two pure extremes of impure life. Similarly Frantz, after the failure of his attempt at suicide, seeks in vagabondage both the uncomplicated joys of childhood and the lost Valentine.

Now I submit that this is an entirely artificial conception. Youths of eighteen or so do not ordinarily idealize childhood, and they are quick to feel insulted at being still considered children at that age. When Frantz remarks, "Quelle idée de faire l'homme à dix-sept ans! Rien ne me dégoutte davantage,"⁵ we have an exact reversal of the usual adolescent attitude. Since the whole book is based on the notion that Meaulnes and Frantz trail their clouds of glory proudly, the reader is faced at the outset with an improbability great enough to invalidate the feeling of psychological consistency upon which even fantasy must rest. Peter Pan as a little boy may be acceptable if worst comes to worst; but a Peter Pan who, like Frantz, has tried to blow his brains out over the desertion of his beloved, or who, like Meaulnes, has taken a mistress in the absence of his Beatrice, is merely preposterous.

The central episode of the novel is a transposition to the plane of the fantastic of an occurrence in Fournier's own life. On Ascension Day, the first of June, 1905, he exchanged a

⁴ *The Wanderer*, p. 306.

⁵ *Le Grand Meaulnes*, Paris, Emile-Paul frères, 1925, p. 156.

few words with a young girl whom he met near the Cours-la-Reine. He saw her a second time after Mass in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, and much later, in the summer of 1913, he met her again briefly at Rochefort.⁶ There can be no question that these encounters were of capital importance in Fournier's emotional life. He often refers to this girl in his letters as "Yvonne de Galais" and eight years after their first meeting, on the second of May, 1913, he writes to Jacques Rivière that on learning that she was now married and the mother of two children he had sobbed the whole night. In the same letter he applies to her a line from Claudel: *Epoise de peu de moments, que tu es étroite et urgente!* The Domain episode in the novel is clearly an attempt by Fournier to crystallize his memories of this girl. His basic incapacity to create resulted, however, in the coldness and passivity of the Yvonne de Galais in the book.

In order to provide a proper setting for this ideal woman, Fournier intended to join the delicate dream world of the Symbolists to the ordinary existence of the schoolboys at Sainte-Agathe. His book was to be a "perpétuel va-et-vient insensible du rêve à la réalité; 'Rêve' entendu comme l'immense et imprécise vie enfantine planant au-dessus de l'autre et sans cesse mise en rumeur par les échos de l'autre."⁷ The characters were not, therefore, conceived as real people in the sense that many of Dickens' creations are real or as Huckleberry Finn, for example, is real. Frantz and Meaulnes and Yvonne de Galais are wan figures of late Symbolism. When Fournier wrote to Jacques Rivière of his "douleur passionnée et romantique comme les grands livres de Villiers de l'Isle Adam,"⁸ he was expressing an enthusiasm which explains much of what is weak and bad in his book.

The difficulty is that although Fournier's characters were not conceived as real people, they are forced, through Fournier's intention to join the real to the dream world, to act from time to time in the context of ordinary existence. Thus Fournier's plan for the book was doomed from the start. The aesthetic satisfactoriness of Maeterlinck's heroes, or Villiers', depends upon their inhabiting a Never-Never Land. Within their own fragile, shadowed world they can move with assurance and

command "the willing suspension of disbelief," but Pelléas intriguing with the innkeeper's daughter or Axel with a cold in the head would at once become grotesque. This, one feels, is what has happened to Meaulnes and Frantz de Galais. The world of Sainte-Agathe and the world of the Domain are never joined satisfactorily, and in the nature of things they could not have been.

Yvonne de Galais, who represents for Meaulnes all that is good and pure in the Domain, is cold and so strenuously idealized that she is never more than an abstraction. Perhaps because like "Mlle. de Q." (Fournier's other name for the girl of the Cours-la-Reine) she was a symbol for Fournier himself, she moves (one cannot say "lives") in an atmosphere so rarefied that her charm does not reach the reader at all. She is described as

la plus grave des jeunes filles, la plus frèle des femmes. Une lourde chevelure blonde pesait sur son front et sur son visage délicatement dissiné, finement modelé. Sur son teint très pur l'été avait posé deux taches de rousseur . . . aux moments de tristesse, de découragement, ou seulement de réflexion profonde ce visage si pur se marbrait légèrement de rouge comme il arrive chez certains malades gravement atteints sans qu'on le sache. Alors toute l'admiration de celui qui la regardait faisait place à une sorte de pitié d'autant plus déchirante qu'elle surprenait davantage.⁹

Her relationship to Poe's heroines and to their French counterparts is here too marked to need comment. Her charm depends upon her gravity and fragility. Of her manner Fournier says that "elle reprit sa pose songeuse et enfantine, son regard bleu, immobile."¹⁰ It is hard to imagine a personality paler than that.

Meaulnes, as the gawky peasant transformed by a vision of the ideal into a seeker after it

⁶ Henri Gillet, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

⁷ Jacques Rivière and Alain-Fournier, *Correspondance, 1905-1914*, Paris, Gallimard, 1926, I, 323, letter of 22 August, 1906.

⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 216, letter of 4 June, 1908.

⁹ *LGM*, 229-230.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 231. It is interesting to note that Robert Champigny in an article in *The French Review* (Jan. 51, XXIV, 3, pp. 209-214) examines both Meaulnes and Frantz de Galais as offering the key to what he calls "the mystery" of *LGM* and rejects them both in favor of François Seure! Nothing could better indicate the unreality of the character of Yvonne than that she, about whom the whole action of the book revolves, should not even be considered in this connection.

might, under other circumstances and in another book, have been successful. But from the start he is invested with melodramatic trappings which outweigh his humanity. He comes to the *lycée* with the rather sinister reputation of having at least been present when his younger brother drowned in a swampy pool where they were both swimming. On the first night of his stay he sets off some left-over fire-works, so that his arrival is marked by the lurid glow of sky-rockets. After his meeting with Yvonne de Galais he becomes moody and withdrawn, and does not change throughout the rest of the book. Although Fournier has, through the Valentine episode, provided Meaulnes with a reason to desert Yvonne, one continues to feel that the desertion and the death of Yvonne were both contrived so that Meaulnes' expressed conviction may prove true:

... j'en suis persuadé maintenant, lorsque j'avais découvert le Domaine sans nom, j'étais à une hauteur, à un degré de perfection et de pureté que je n'atteindrai jamais plus. Dans la mort seulement... je retrouverai peut-être la beauté de ce temps-là.¹¹

But Meaulnes at his most Byronic is credible and human beside Frantz de Galais. A youth with the airs of a little boy even when he has become a frayed and haggard mountebank, a brother so abysmally self-centered that he does not hesitate to take from his sister her husband of less than one day, Frantz de Galais is little short of a monster. In him the catch-penny melodrama of the book comes to a sharp focus. His vagabondage, the oath, his general air of being both helpless and an evil genius, in all this one can see only the last degradation of the Romantic hero. It is with a real sense of shock that one leaves him at the end of the book established in improbable domesticity with the errant Valentine.

In Fournier's favor it must be said that the realistic aspects of the novel, the descriptions of landscapes, for example, and the *lycée*, of Seurel's mother and the village of Sainte-Agathe are excellent. They are, as one learns from reading the letters to Rivière, Fournier's own memories translated into fiction. In them one does often perceive a high degree of literary skill.

The nameless melancholy of adolescence, the wistful, dreamy atmosphere conjured up in the pictures of gloomy winter days in the bare rooms and courtyard of the *lycée*, these have real charm. Yet in themselves they are not enough to force one to admit that Fournier has succeeded in joining the real to the dream world, especially since the most poetic of these evocations, for instance Seurel's reverie during a school outing in the woods, deal rather with remembered reality than with the fantasy world of the Domain.

Henri Gillet, an admirer of Fournier, says that on the day when the latter decided to write simply and directly a story which could be his own, he found his road to Damascus.¹² Yet it must certainly be clear from what has been said here that whatever else *Le Grand Meaulnes* may be, it is not a simple story simply told. The plot has manifold complications; the characters, because they are neither convincingly real nor satisfactorily unreal are merely incredible; and Fournier's intention of showing both the child's world and the adult's only results in making the problems of love and birth and death in the latter hang upon the arbitrary willfulness proper to the former.

Many French critics have made much of the poetry of adolescence which they find in the book. I suppose it is entirely possible that the perception of this poetry depends so heavily on atmospheres and other intangibles that a reader who has grown up in the United States is unable to approach Fournier's book with the emotional attitude it requires. Where Christian Dedeyan and Walter Jöhr, for example, find youth's capacity for idealization and an exaltation of Christian purity,¹³ I find only one half-pennyworth of tawdry adventure to an intolerable deal of saccharine.

DONALD SCHIER

Carleton College

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 251.

¹² Gillet, *op. cit.*, 304-305.

¹³ Christian Dedeyan, *Alain-Fournier et la réalité secrète*, Paris, Julliard, 1948, 141 ff.; Walter Jöhr, *Alain-Fournier, le paysage d'une âme*, Cahiers du Rhône, 61 (XXV), Editions de la Bacconière, Neuchâtel, 1945, 179 ff.

University Scholarships and Regents Scholarship Examination

ACCORDING to an Education Law, effective August 1, 1913, and amended in 1947 and 1949, state scholarships were established amounting to \$1400 each. The distribution follows political boundaries and is based on population and competitive examinations.* Five such scholarships have until recently been awarded each county for each assembly district therein. That number was raised to ten, two years ago. Additional scholarships are awarded at the discretion of the regents with the approval of the director of the budget. In Part I, on page 23 of the "Forty-Fifth Annual Report of the Education Department," published in 1950, we read that 827 university scholarships were awarded for the academic year 1947/48. This is the latest annual report, and at that time, five scholarships were considered for each assemblyman, that is to say, assembly district. For the last three years we rely on other sources.

In Onondaga County, with a population of about 340,000, thirty university scholarships were awarded this year as well as last and in 1949, meaning ten for each assemblyman. On this basis and considering the fact that our State Assembly has 150 members, we arrive at a figure of about 1500 scholarships amounting to \$2,100,000, a respectable sum. According to the list of "Winners of University Scholarships," published by the State Education Department, there were 1654 receivers of these rewards during each of the last three years. If the present proposal before the Legislature is adopted, this number will be increased to 12,000, amounting to almost 17 million dollars and reaching approximately 10% of all high school graduates. An individual increase beyond \$1400 could be expected as a compensation for the loss through inflation.

These scholarships are awarded on the basis of competitive written examinations held early in March annually and lasting six hours the first day and $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours the second. They are

thorough, comprehensive, and quite difficult and consist of three parts containing mostly objective questions of the multiple choice type.

In the 1949 examination, Part I was made up of 230 questions counting

	230 points
Part II of two writing exercises which were more or less free compositions on two topics	90 points
Part III of 165 objective questions	<u>160 points</u>
Total	480 points

The 1950 examination was very similar with the difference that Part I contained only 185 questions, though also counting 230 points.

Up to that year, printed copies were available and probably served as a welcome guide for students preparing for this examination. None are obtainable for 1951. It seems they will be used again because, last March, every student received his examination in a sealed envelope, was the only one allowed to see it and had to return it upon completion for shipment to Albany. This will most likely result in a considerable saving of expenses in the preparation of these examinations.

If we examine the subjects involved, we shall find faithful adherence to the statement of eligibility contained in the latest State University Handbook #34, page 19, 1951 edition. Eligible are those "who have taken the Regents scholarship examination prescribed for the competition including English, social studies, mathematics, science, health, music, art and practical arts as covered in the core or basic curriculum of the secondary school."

In this "core or basic" curriculum *all* foreign languages are conspicuous by their absence! The same naturally applies to the Regents scholarship examination.

Until two years ago, the scores of the regular Regents examinations in foreign languages were

* Report presented at the meeting of the New York State Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in Albany, October 20, 1951.

used as a partial basis for awarding the scholarships, but no longer in the enlightened year of 1950, nor in 1951. Complete exclusion from Regents scholarship examination is destroying one of the most powerful incentives for taking foreign languages in secondary schools. And this at a time when the world has become so small and communication so swift that it easily penetrates the most remote corners of our globe where it is meant to inform its peoples of the truth in the present controversies. And this is happening in the Empire State, the largest of our Union in population, the one which claims to be and is progressive and is leading in many fields of human endeavor. Have the lessons of the last World War been lost completely in regard to the indispensability of foreign languages?—we rightly ask.

What can we do in order to change this unnatural situation? There are several ways to be explored. First, we must gather all pertinent facts on this subject including the names of policy makers, of members of the State Examination Board and their advisers. Meeting them personally should be advantageous.¹ Second, we shall have to offer a definite and sound plan for including foreign languages in the Regents scholarship examination. In addition to widely known general arguments we could offer some like those suggested by Professor Leo L. Rockwell of Colgate University in his recent article, "Modern Languages in General Education" published in "School and Society," May, 1950. I quote: "Investigations covering thousands of students have shown that secondary-school study of foreign languages improves freshman college grades in all subjects almost in direct proportion to the number of years of study, while the length of time devoted to other subjects has no effect (except in social studies which

have an adverse one) on freshman grades." (p. 306.)² The average percentiles increased from 66 to 84, a very telling argument. Although these investigations were made some time ago, they are still valid today and should be confirmed and supplemented by more recent ones.

This committee, in the process of formation and so far consisting of Professors Charles A. Choquette and Leo L. Rockwell, Colgate, Mario A. Pei, Columbia,³ and myself would gratefully acknowledge any information or suggestion on this important subject. The opinion and participation of our high school colleagues including our supervisors will especially be welcome, for they are, by the very nature of their work, in the frontline of battle. Incidentally, at a faculty meeting last week, my own Dean complimented our director of admission by announcing that Syracuse University had enrolled 200 holders of State University scholarships this fall.

Let me close by restating the fact that the recipients of these scholarships are the cream of the intellectual crop in our high schools, if I may use this metaphor, and many of them are likely to be our leading citizens of tomorrow.

ALBERT SCHOLZ

Syracuse University

¹ On January 21, 1952, at a meeting with Commissioner Kulp at Albany, some progress was made for solving this problem.

² Cf. the same quotation in the fascinating article: "Language, the Key to Life," by Dean Corwin C. Roach, Kenyon College, the *Modern Language Journal*, October, 1951.

³ In the meantime, Miss Lucy A. Massey, Bronxville High School, Dr. Edith O. Wallace, Albany, Miss Evelyn A. Stutts, Buffalo, and Dr. Marie Davis, Skidmore, have joined our committee.

The Teaching and Development of Russian Vocabulary

THERE appears to be no commonly accepted Russian word list developed up to the present which would serve as a core of material to be taught. In the absence of a Russian list, the onus falls upon us as individual teachers to determine the nature and extent of Russian vocabulary which we may reasonably expect to teach within limitations of time prescribed.

In making an initial selection of Russian words to serve as a basis for teaching First Year vocabulary, it is obvious that many considerations arise. Speaking broadly, vocabulary may be considered as disconnected, disjoined, discrete words. On the other hand, if one be a Gestaltist, he would only give consideration to the teaching of vocabulary as part and parcel of a dynamic, living, and meaningful context. A second consideration would take into account the general and specific aims of the particular Russian course. These, of course, vary from one university to another. They will also vary with the level of the student body, the degree of previous linguistic training, if any, and with the nature of the Russian course they were pursuing. To illustrate, students whose major interests lie in the field of the physical sciences will probably not have the same incentives and the same goals in their study of Russian as students of the Liberal Arts whom I am better acquainted with at Brooklyn College. However, whether one attends one college or another, fundamental considerations of grammar will find students called upon to conjugate verbs of the 1st and 2nd conjugations—essential words such as *ponimat'*, *chitat'*, *govorit'*. Infinitives studied as part of grammar become necessary components of a working vocabulary, which applies with equal validity to all fundamental grammatical elements. That includes the bugaboo of all students, the Perfective Aspect!

In short, there will always be a distinction between general and specific vocabularies. The

first would necessarily consist of words general in content and of the highest frequency of occurrence. The second would be specific and determined by over-all aims of the individual course. Thus we arrive at another important consideration in the development of our Russian vocabulary. We must distinguish between vocabulary for active recall and vocabulary for passive recognition. I cannot emphasize too strongly how important this consideration is with regard to the manner in which we shape our techniques of instruction.

It is in point at this time to mention that I am aware that for time-worn reasons, the primary aim of modern language instruction in the United States has been that of teaching students to read foreign languages. If the reading aim is to have priority over the speaking aim, we should be obliged to make further modification in the selections of words in the development of Russian vocabulary. It would be necessary to place more emphasis upon the need for adequate textbooks designed to promote proficiency in better reading ability. Personally, I am a proponent of the multiple language approach, with speaking as its first aim in first-year Russian. Active knowledge of the Russian language gives the student a feeling of affinity with it. It offers a warm sense of kinship and a pleasurable sensation which is important and immediate. His knowledge may be limited, but it offers a sense of gratification because he can express himself in Russian.

The above have been some of the problems which come to mind when we think of developing a Russian vocabulary. Attention should now be focused upon methods of teaching.

Vocabulary should be taught in a meaningful context. The material for such context can be found in an adequate textbook, reading selections, conversations, practical dialogues, proverbs, and idioms. Other sources are *realia* material: newspapers, songs, lyrics, motion pictures, recordings, plays, language festivals,

games, and dances. One cannot overemphasize that the amount of vocabulary conveyed to students by recourse to such activities is incalculable.

In the actual teaching of vocabulary as words, we can resort to grouping them in some meaningful sequence. The core of such sequence might well be their common linguistic roots, their common sounds, or their contrasted roots and different sounds. Specifically it is possible to prepare vocabulary lists in prearranged word groupings as cognates, antonyms, synonyms, and so forth. I predicate this thought upon the belief that the simultaneous teaching of a group of words having a common derivative can be as efficiently taught and retained as teaching the source of the derivation itself. For example in the teaching of *vynimal'*, reference may well be made to: *otnimal'*, *prinimat'*, *zanimal'*, *unimal'*, *snimal'*. The mnemonic element plus repetition will serve to reinforce the unifying element of their common derivation. These serve to integrate the word group. To teach word grouping on such a basis will rapidly foster vocabulary growth. Other ideas for vocabulary building call for grouping together Russian cognates of English words: *biologiya*, *matematika*, *president*, *conferentsiya*.

Other ways vary as individual teaching situations may require. I have arranged vocabulary with subject matter as the primary consideration, and grammar sequence as the secondary element. Thus vocabulary study becomes progressive, graded, and treats the general and specific needs of the student. My methods of teaching vocabulary in the First Year Russian course, involve a technique which requires that students *speak*. In fine, regardless of the nature of the material, howsoever it is grouped, the student must repeat orally what he is to learn. Essentially the means of ingress common to all methods and techniques will be audio-visual. One must remember that the old-fashioned method of memory and drill in vocabulary building is not as effective, in the long run, as teachers are prone to believe. Words learned by rote have a way of disappearing from the memory of students.

Theoretically one could multiply techniques and methods for teaching vocabulary *ad infinitum*, but, practically, one must remember, as was stated earlier, the nature of the specific Russian course the student is pursuing.

FAN PARKER

Brooklyn College

Announcement

The Central States Modern Language Association will hold its Annual Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, on May 2-3.

Rules as Tools for the Beginning Student of the Russian Language

THIS paper is a purely pragmatic one, not concerned with any question of philology or any theory as such. Its major premise is that more and better use of integrating rules—of sweeping generalizations even, to venture a more provocative phrase—could and should be made in introducing students to the Russian language than usually is made. I am thinking primarily of the first-year student.

This student is, I believe, always bewildered and too often discouraged by the structure of Russian, which is so different from English and to him may appear utterly alien to it. I think we are all of us already agreed that it is a part of our job not only to tell him that the two languages have come down to us from a common stock in the dim past, but also to point out some of the clearest of the living tokens of that fact as we meet them in the two very different and yet still related tongues spoken today by the Russians and by ourselves. He is not less bewildered also by the feeling of having stepped into the trackless jungle of a speech in which every noun—of which there are several breeds—is equipped with a dozen masks, and the verbs, Janus-like, may each turn not only either of two, or it may be any of four, faces but often—heaven help us—any of two score or more, with never two of them saying quite the same thing.

It is a part of my argument today—the half of it, I should say—that our obligation and privilege to call attention to the proven kinship of the two cultures, Slavic and Anglo-Saxon, as evidenced in the continuing similarities in the languages, should be conceived and executed on this beginning level less in terms of philology than in terms of pedagogy.

By this I do not mean to justify guesswork in the guise of linguistic science. That way could lie only disaster, pedagogically as otherwise. One could, for instance on meeting the word *korol'* exclaim, "Ah, the man who plays the

crown-role, and whom in English we call a king"—and that idly tricky word-play might help some students to remember it. Yes, but how much greater is the mnemonic as well as other educational value of the philologically correct explanation tying it in with that greatest of medieval western rulers, Charlemagne!

What I do mean is that I think the teacher should encourage the learner to make every possible association between the new language and his native English—or occasionally with Latin, German, Spanish, or any other tongue of which the student may have some knowledge—by the method of calling attention to whatever resemblances, whether phonetic or morphological, strike him as handy mnemonic pegs to put it on during the process of mastering it as a new language tool. Thus *vyrazhenie* is a perfect morphological mate to our *expression*: not only are *peshkom* and *verkhom* morphological twins but one of them evidently was born as a striking metaphor and won its spurs as such: the new Russian *brat* should feel less lost between the English *brat* and his own *rebēta*, all brethren by one reckoning if not by another. Whether or not they may be philologically cognate the Russian *lit'*, "to pour" sounds like *litre*, the French unit of liquid measure; *golodnyi*, "hungry," like our "hollowed"; *idti* like our "itinerant"; *zdrorovyi* or *zdravstvuite* like our "sturdy"; the Russian personal pronoun *ia* reminds one of the Spanish "yo," and so on. Thus, by way of final illustration, does not the suffixal syllable *ti*, as in *idti* or *nesti*, markedly resemble the English particle "to," which in its usage as the sign of the infinitive carries exactly the same meaning—as in "to go," for instance, or "to carry."

There is no one here who is not already aware that the number of such parallelisms or similarities of some sort between Russian and English is legion. Nor is there anyone here—I hope the speaker of the moment is no exception

—who is not also aware that many of such outward similarities are not at all the expression or result of a common original linguistic coinage, but are on the contrary merely fortuitous resemblances. Certain of the words that I cited for their resemblances in sound as in meaning are clearly cognate, as a matter of demonstrable philological fact. Certain others are not, insofar as I am aware.

One or two of them I paired off as I did partly for the very reason that I doubt that it would be possible to substantiate a claim for any sort of philological relationship, however tenuous, between them. Parenthetically, I am almost equally doubtful of the possibility of proving, by strictly scientific methods, that there never could have been any true linkage between them. The balance of my reason was my belief that the beginning student needs an associational peg upon which to hang every new linguistic element, be it a word, an idiom, an accent pattern, or an inflectional syllable—which last he should recognize for what it is as a highly standardized, mass produced, and all but cellophane wrapped and patented package of syntactical meaning; my belief that it is an important part of our job as teachers to proffer such pegs, and lastly that the measure of their individual worth is to be sought rather in their immediate usefulness to the student than in their academic defensibility on strictly philological grounds. A word-hook, like a clotheshook, should be conspicuous enough only to be found when needed, and durable enough only to serve as long as needed. It should not be an object of art to be displayed as such, or upon which to sacrifice some one or more garments to oblivion.

So much for the first half of my argument, which might be boiled down to a plea for a degree of considered recklessness in matching Russian with English words—in matching the new and unfamiliar pattern with any old and familiar one, holding always to the point of view of the learner's language background on the one hand and of his goal as a learner on the other.

The second half of my argument will be a plea for a similar, and not less carefully measured, recklessness in the presentation of Russian grammar, as such, to the beginners in the language.

I am, or may I say, we are at the moment trying to take a fresh view of the whole problem from the student's angle. We are aware that from his point of view it would be difficult to find two English words that would be less happy or less auspicious in their connotations than the words "grammar" and "rule." Put them together and you may get something like the Soviet Russian "freeze-bomb" recently reported from Paris—an innocent looking trifle possessed of the power to paralyze all interest within classroom range.

For myself, I start from the three premises that (1) Russian has grammar, (2) that fact cannot be permanently concealed from most students, and (3) we should not attempt to hide it from them. The foregoing premises may or may not be, as I hope, impregnable. I proceed to the three admittedly more vulnerable hypotheses upon which is based my already explicitly enough stated thesis. These are (1) that the student tries to escape the grammar without abandoning the effort to learn the language, (2) that he has no luck at this, and (3) that the one possible talisman with which to pierce the armor of a forbidding grammar in order really to get into the Russian language itself is none other than a handy ringful of well-chosen rules to unlock those forbidding defenses.

Concretely, what do I mean? The exception may, as we are told, be necessary to prove the rule: from experience we know that many a jauntily enterprising "rule," in quotes, may be soon crushed by its own exceptions, so irregular, in many ways, is Russian—like English. I mean that I think that we don't sufficiently exploit the wealth of internal consistencies in the Russian language. I think we should have the courage of our conviction that details are best mastered when threaded together on some common principle, and have less hesitation about pointing out relevant unifying principles—even when the latter may be no more than analogies, provided only that they do serve as binders and that no exaggerated or false values are incidentally attached to them in the process.

For instances let us return first to the verb infinitives in accented *ti*. It is my belief that the beginner's net burden is made rather lighter than heavier by knowing—the knowledge should, but need not, be listed under "rules"—

that this represents an ancestral type, so to speak, of the modern Russian verb, from which was evolved the now far commoner soft-sign infinitive. This bit of knowledge provides a natural perspective for the surer appraisal and understanding both of the general semantic character of this class of verbs, which must have been an especially hardworked crew in olden times, and of the characteristic differences in stem and in accent patterns between and among these and other verbs.

Another instance would be the affinity between the nominative plural and the genitive singular forms. Obvious as this is, I think that I have never seen any reference to it in print—certainly not in any elementary text—and I am not certain that I ever even heard anyone speak of it. This identity has been demolished by historical grammar, I know, but I do not see why the beginner need know that, and do see it as helpful to him to be confidently aware of the actual identities today.

Let me, by way of conclusion, take a brief glance back over my whole topic. That topic might almost as well have been labelled "Is Russian really so unruly?" or "One iron curtain that is not there." It was so broad a topic that my presentation of it may have sounded like a curious advocacy of an utterly outmoded and lopsided formalism of approach to the task of teaching, or learning, a foreign language.

I plead guilty of being old fashioned enough to have no fear of rules as such. I plead guilty also to saying that I think that most of us can and should show our students how to make freer and more effective use of general patterns—of any helpful rules or analogies, that is, whether between Russian and English or entirely within the Russian—than is suggested by any textbook of which I know.

I plead not guilty, however, to any charge of putting rules ahead of all else in importance. I did not even refer to the literary or the con-

versational approach to Russian. Please do not take that to mean that I belittle them, or would in any way do so if I could. Those approaches, unlike the one about which I have chosen to talk, need no defence.

If, as a last argumentative tilt, we agree to look at the whole matter of learning a new tongue, in this case the Russian, from the one angle of the mere task of acquiring new symbols for ideas, and begin casting about in our minds for the best possible ways or means to do this, then the grammar-rule method is licked cold at the start. The best way to identify a word with a meaning in anybody's mind is surely to bring them together there as dramatically as possible; and the best if not the only way to do that is by making the word focal to some real-life situation, some moving human experience toward which the subject's immediate attention has been drawn. The ideal method thus must always be conversational or literary, or possibly both, from this angle at least.

But one need not be a Whitehead, a Menniger, or an Einstein to realize that a theoretically best method to accomplish any one part of a given task may not, even in theory—let alone in practice—be the best method to accomplish the whole of that task. In this case what is admittedly the ideal method for any part of the task is not, I believe, even a possible method for the whole of it.

The shortest distance between two points will in theory always be a straight line. In practice, however, some very different route will often be a better one, and I have tried to eschew theory in favor of practice. The best practice, I believe, calls for the use of not fewer, but of a few more, and more carefully chosen, rules in teaching Russian.

ROLAND G. DAVIDSON

3008 Russell Street
Berkeley, California

The Refranes of Marqués de Santillana

AMONG the earliest books printed in the Iberian Peninsula is the collection of *refranes* that were gathered by Iñigo Lopez de Mendoza, commonly known by his title of Marqués de Santillana, nobleman and scholar whose general affection for letters produced some of the finest literature in the Spanish language. A prominent member of the illustrious literary court of Juan II, Iñigo Lopez de Mendoza "a ruego del rey don Juan ordenó estos refranes que dizen las viejas tras el fuego, e van ordenados por el A. B. C." And these *refranes*, or sayings of old women 'round the fire, have to this day been considered as one of the oldest, if not the first, *refranero* ever to have been compiled in Spain, even though in recent times doubt has been cast on the authenticity of its authorship. However, there is ample evidence in much of his other writing that the Marqués was fully familiar with the popular sayings of the "*gente de baxa e servil condición*" and that he had no inhibitions about introducing them into the society of the nobles.

Notwithstanding the fact that the *refrán* has exerted such an important influence and has been so integral a characteristic of the Spanish language in the entire history of its development, this earliest collection of Santillana has never been published in the United States despite the increasing high frequency of *refranes* in American grammars and students' readers; it has even been difficult to obtain easily abroad. Happily for our Spanish students, this gap has now been filled by the distinguished English Hispanist, J. B. Trend who has included all the *refranes* in his admirable selection of the *Prose and Verse of Marqués de Santillana*.

The origins of the *refranes*, or popular sayings, are as remote in Spain as they are elsewhere in the world. The Book of Proverbs in the Old Testament abounds in expressions which sound as if they had been minted only yesterday, while the continued revisions of Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations* attest their

perennial and universal popularity. Concerned with ordinary things that occur in everyday life, they are generally couched in language whose simplicity is as basic as the universal wisdom they express; and they exemplify perfectly the maxim about brevity being the spice of life.

It is natural to assume that since those of the Marqués are specifically sayings of old women, they would be concerned with the down-to-earth realities of daily life, and also reflect the limits of acquired knowledge, although this does not in any way detract from the innate native intelligence of those who rely on them. In section A alone, for example, the reader is struck by the many references to bread:

- A pan duro, diente agudo.*
- A pan de quinze días, hambre de tres semanas.*
- A mengua de pan, buenas son tortas.*
- A mala venta, pan pintado.*
- A poco pan tomar primero.*

Obviously, although there is no *refrán* in this collection which bears precise analogy to Swift's "Bread is the staff of life," it is clear that bread enjoyed a stellar role in the lives of these old dames 'round the fire.

More numerous than to bread, however, are the allusions to God in whom the faith of these simple folk is ever steadfast, since He is always dependable and can be trusted unreservedly. "*La verdad es fija de Dios,*" the old women contend; and, "*De hora a hora Dios mejora.*" His solicitude is plainly apparent since "*Dió Dios fauas (habas) a quien no tiene quixadas.*" His protection is humbly petitioned for various purposes, with implicit confidence at all times that it will be offered: "*Del río manso me guarde Dios, que del fuerte yo me guardaré,*" and again, "*De ál (otro) me vengue Dios, que del pastor agua y nieve.*" As we commonly say: "God helps those who help themselves."

The language of these *refranes*, despite occasional archaisms in spelling and meaning, is on the whole strikingly modern; so much so, that it is difficult at first to realize that they

have remained unchanged for five hundred years. Equally surprising at first sight are the numerous instances of popular sayings in the English language which not only resemble some of those collected by Santillana, but in many cases, are almost word-for-word translations.

"*No es tan brauo el león como lo pintan*," for example, appears in George Herbert's collection of proverbs, *Jacula Prudentum* (1640): "The lion is not so fierce as they paint him."

Shakespeare's advice: "Suit the action to the word, the word to the action," is not always practiced, as Santillana's old women well knew when they claimed that "*Dezir y faser, no es para todos ombres*." In other words, "The great end of life is not knowledge but action."

The viejas also contended that "*Más vale saber que auer*" but that "*Pensar no es saber*." Also "*Mucho fablar, mucho errar*." The idea that "Wisdom is better than rubies" is contained in the Proverbs of the Old Testament. While La Fontaine, at a much later date wrote: "Let ignorance talk as it will, learning has its value." Dryden likewise had a low opinion of those "who think too little and who talk too much," confirming the statement of Matthew Prior before him that "they never taste who always drink, they always talk who never think."

Very often, the same idea is expressed more than once through the use of different figures of speech. The currently common aphorism: "*Quien va despacio, va lejano*," is more graphically expressed in Santillana: *Nadar y nadar, y a la orilla afogar*." Today's maxim that "*poco a poco, se llega lejos*," conveyed the same idea as the old women's "*Grano a grano finche la gallina el papo*," although in the latter case, the result attained may perhaps be an undesirable one, as was the case of Aesop's frog.

The frequency of the pronominative "*quién*" is higher than that of any other substantive in this *refranero*, and forms the initial word in practically the entire list in section Q. From "*Quien lengua ha, a Roma va*," which is the first, to "*Quien no fabla, no le oye Dios*," there are exactly forty-nine of them. The same holds true for the negative "*no*" which begins all the *refranas* in the N list.

Motteux's translation of *Don Quixote*, a veritable treasury of *refranas*, has enriched the English language with many of its most popular sayings, several of which had already been noted by Santillana before Cervantes placed them in the mouths of his characters. That "A closed mouth catches no flies," had already been observed by the old women round the fire: "*En boca cerrada no entra moxca*."

Santillana's "*Una golondrina no faze verano*," later appeared in Cervantes which Motteux rendered as "One swallow never makes a summer."

However, this saying had already been recorded in the English language as far back as 1546, the publication date of the *Proverbes of John Heywood* which forms the oldest collection of English colloquial sayings. It is interesting to note the proximity in time with which the English follows the oldest Spanish collection, and one is naturally led to wonder if Heywood had access to Santillana's work and if it had ever been made available in English. There is no record, however, that a translation had ever been done or printed in English.

However, one like the other is characterized by that platonic simplicity which is essential for beauty of style, harmony, grace and good rhythm.

*Oro es lo que oro vale.
Uso haze maestro.
No hay atajo sin trabajo.
En buen dia, buenas obras.*

The earliest and most natural manifestation of popular art, their continued use and the esteem of the ages through which they have passed have endowed these *refranas* as well as countless thousands of others with their chief value.

This is all the more remarkable when one considers the origins of these *refranas* which in the words of the distinguished humanist, Juan de Valdés are "*dichos vulgares lor más dellos, nacidos y criados entre viejas, tras el fuego, hilando sus ruecas*."

WALTER BARA

490 Whitehall Street
Lynbrook, Long Island.

Mrs. Willing Enjoys Her Morning

IT WAS hot that morning in Room 9, where Mary Willing, of the Department of Modern Languages at St. Mary's College, was about to teach her class in English for Foreigners.

"Mrs. Willing', do you want that *Hi hopen the windows?*" asked Anne-Marie Morin, a sandy-haired, bespectacled French girl, who had come a few minutes early.

"Do you want *me* to open the windows?" Mary Willing corrected.

She had learned not to smile at her students' mistakes in English. Indeed, she had never experienced the slightest desire to laugh at Anne-Marie. Her old-young face and sad eyes testified to the fact that she was on speaking terms with suffering. Invasion of her homeland; semi-starvation; a long sojourn in a concentration camp, where both her parents had been put to death. . . . Anne-Marie had known them all.

"Yes, please open the windows, Anne-Marie," Mary continued. "I'm glad to see that you've learned to pronounce your aitches," she added; "but do be careful to put them only where they belong. The words are *I* and *open*."

"*Hi study Henglish since four mont's,*" volunteered little, bright-eyed Sister Marie Christophe, an Ursuline nun from Quebec, who had accompanied Anne-Marie to Room 9. "*Hi make ze heffort, hand Hi now put haitches heverywhere!*"

Sister Marie Christophe's carefully articulated sentences never failed to fascinate Mary Willing. "It's as if she scrubbed every word with an invisible brush before saying it," she reflected.

The first bell rang. She heard it with an apprehensive little shudder. Ever since she had undertaken the teaching of the class in English for Foreigners four months before, she had started the day with the sensation of stepping into an icy bath. She had never known what to expect, especially from the Latin-Americans. So many things—a letter from home, a holiday in the offing, a change in the weather—affected them, precipitated minor crises. . . . "Look,

Mrs. Willing', we have tears in our eyes!" Esther Rojas-Juárez, one of the Cubans, had exclaimed one rainy day. And the weather-change or the letter from home or the anticipated holiday invariably resulted in an excited Spanish conversation, in the idiom of Mexico, Cuba, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, or one of the South American countries.

"I feel that I don't always control the Latins very well," Mary had once confided to Sister Francis Helen, the scholarly head of the Department of Modern Languages.

"They behave as they do because they are temperamentally unlike us. They mean no harm," the nun replied. "Just remember that you are the logical person for this work," she had added firmly. "No one else in the department has your background of three modern languages. Be glad that you can use it on behalf of others."

Mary recalled this conversation as the members of the class entered the room. Slender, dark-eyed Carmen Ramírez, a small, tempestuous Puerto Rican, came first; Gloria Gall, a blonde Cuban with wide blue eyes, followed her. Then came three more Puerto Ricans—Ana, Rosa, and Antonia Portela—simply-dressed sisters with well-brushed brown curls, tranquil brown eyes, and small, neat mouths. The fuzzy black ringlets, restless black eyes, and slightly barbaric costume jewelry of Rosy Cárdenas, the Mexican who entered after them, contrasted somewhat flamboyantly with the Portela tidiness. Margarita Martínez, a tall, handsome brunette from Venezuela, came next. Then followed Thérèse Corrivaux, from Montreal; Elsa Bravo, from Ecuador; and Cecilia Guardia and Amparito Albalá, from Guatemala and Panamá respectively. Tiny, wistful Kazimiera Olzewski, the displaced Pole who had spent some months in a German camp, entered last. Closing the door noiselessly, she moved swiftly to her seat next to the open window.

As she surveyed her class, a small feeling of panic took possession of Mary Willing. How in Heaven's name was she to teach the members

of this miscellaneous group enough English to enable them soon to take their places in classes with North Americans! Thérèse had had a year of English study at a Canadian university; the Portela sisters had studied the language for four years, Rosy and Amparito for two, Elsa and Cecilia for one, Gloria for six months. Margarita Martínez, the Venezuelan, had come with four words, all of which she had used during her first day in class: "I no speak English." Sister Marie Christophe had come with no words at all!

Conquering the brief feeling of fear, Mary wished her exotic group an affectionate "Good morning." Expressive, wide eyes—blue, brown, and black—looked into her own gray ones as her students replied, "Good morning, Mrs. Willing,'" stressing the second syllable ever so slightly.

"Let us start with our oral exercises," Mary suggested. "'I think this is the thing, the thirtieth thing'."

"That's really a humdinger!" she grimly exclaimed to herself as she watched her flock force unruly tongue-tips between unwilling teeth. She remembered Sister Marie Christophe first attempts: "Hi tink dis his de ting, de tirtiet' ting; Hi sink zis his ze sing, ze sirtiet' sing . . ." and her ultimate: "Hi cannot say zat. Hi 'ave ze false tees!"

"Happy Harry has a handkerchief. A handkerchief has Happy Harry,'" came next.

That was primarily for the French-speaking students—Anne-Marie, Thérèse, and the nun—who struggled, heroically, Mary decided, to produce audible aspirates. She was both proud of and sorry for them.

"If German hadn't been my first language," she thought, remembering the careful training her German-born father and German-American mother had given her, "I'd make just as fine a mess of the German Umlaut and French *u* as these people do of their aitches. . . . And I suppose," she reflected suddenly, "that if I hadn't had all that excellent training in German and French and later in Spanish, I shouldn't be able to help my foreign students at all!"

Mary was unexpectedly glad that she, of all the sizeable teaching staff at St. Mary's had been selected for the class in English for Foreigners. In fact, she suddenly found herself

enjoying her morning! She found herself enjoying the blackboard lesson on prepositions, which her students found at once bewildering and fascinating.

"I am thinking *blank* my sister," she dictated and was not surprised when most of the Latins wrote, "I am thinking *in* my sister"; Anne-Marie and the Canadians, "I am thinking *to* my sister," and Kazia, the German-speaking Pole, "I am thinking *at* my sister."

"The clothes are *blank* the line" was variously rendered: "The clothes are *in*, *at*, *to* the line." "The nest is *blank* the tree" emerged: "The nest is *on*, *at*, *over* the tree."

Large eyes—black and brown and blue—all equally troubled, were fixed reproachfully on Mary Willing.

"But Mrs. Willing', why is it 'The nest is *in* the tree'?"

"I don't know why," replied Mary instantly sympathetic. "I just don't know why! Prepositions seem to be hard in any language."

For once she found herself not minding the ensuing staccato conversation in half the dialects of Latin America and the less vociferous interchange of ideas in the French of Quebec, Montreal, and Paris.

"Shall we have a lesson on word order now?" she suggested after the clamor had subsided a little.

"Oh yes, please, Mrs. Willing!'" exclaimed Gloria, the blonde, blue-eyed Cuban.

"I like very much word order," approved Sister Marie Christophe.

"I no like," contributed Margarita, the Venezuelan who had come with four words of English. "I like more better prepositions. But I will do word order."

"Please write these word groups in columns," Mary directed. "Column 1: 'He, enough, eaten, has.' Column 2: 'He, never, has, any thing, done, interesting.' Now rearrange each of these groups into a good sentence."

The students at the board worked busily and eagerly, consulted each other in Spanish and French anent the proper placement of a word. Mary they questioned in strongly accented English; she had long since made it clear that English was the language of the classroom.

"Please read your first sentence, Anne-Marie."

Anne-Marie had written, "He has enough eaten." So had Thérèse and Sister Marie Christophe. Kazimiera had a twofold version: "He has enough eaten; Enough has he eaten."

The French-speaking students had rendered the second sentence as, "He has never anything done interesting." Kazimiera's rendition of the sentence was, "He has never anything interesting done."

"And now," said Mary, after correcting the sentences and explaining the mysteries of English word order as best she could, "we shall have time to listen to the reading of one of the compositions you wrote for today. Which one should you like to hear?"

"I like those of Sister Marie Christophe," suggested Rosa Portela, one of the three modest sisters from Puerto Rico.

"Yes, I should like that she read her composition," added Thérèse with enthusiasm.

"I should like her to read . . ." Mary automatically corrected. "Will you read us your composition please, Sister?"

Resolutely wrapping her tongue around her th's and exhaling audible aitches, the little nun read the following:

IN WINTER

"At the last class, Madame Willing showed us a beautiful picture. It was a scenery under the snow. It is snowing, in slow, thick flakes. To the left, we see a nice stone church with bell-tower and ovals windows. A little fence, iron fence, is around.

"Just in front of the picture there is a little, comfortable red brick house with three chimneys. The door and the windows are whites and the shutters greens. If I remember, there is two larges windows and three littles. Four steps lead to the porch, where are two empty milk bottle.

"On the right, there is a high wooden fence. Between the church and the house and between the house and the wooden fence, there are evergreen trees cover with white snow.

"A few distance at the house, a man with whites hairs is standing and is scattering crumbs to the birds; the birds are fluttering at his feet. This man has a gray suit and a Roman collar; it is to say a clerical garb.

"This picture is peaceful."

Having finished her reading, the little black and white nun turned and smiled at the class. She was at once flustered and pleased, flustered at being the center of attention and pleased by the explosive buzz of compliments from the Latin-American beehive.

"Is pretty descriptions, no, Mrs. Willing?" asked Elsa Bravo, from Ecuador.

"Yes, very pretty!" Mary agreed enthusiastically. She had really enjoyed the word-picture of the "scenery under the snow."

"I like," declared Margarita with great positiveness. "I like very much!"

Mary smiled at her with sudden affection. Why, she was proud of Margarita, proud of her valiant determination to learn English, which, she realized for the first time, was one of the most difficult and illogically pronounced of languages. ("The youth went sooth," Amparito had recently read. "South, Amparito, south." But why, Mrs. Willing'?" Why indeed!)

"Mrs. Willing'," Rosy Cárdenas' harsh, uninflected voice tore the little threads of her musings. "Mrs. Willing', are fifteen minutes left. May we read a fairy tale?"

Fifteen minutes left! Why, where had the hour gone! Somewhat dazed, Mary opened her volume of *Fairy Tales*, by Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm.

"Turn to 'The Seven Ravens,' on page 282. It's your turn to read, Antonia."

"What is ravens, Mrs. Willing'?" Thérèse inquired.

"Yes, I don't also know," said Kazimiera, the Pole, timidly.

"A raven is a bird, a black bird. It has a very ugly voice. A raven is . . . oh, un corbeau," explained Mary, turning suddenly to Thérèse. Then, looking at Kazimiera, she added, "Ein Rabe."

She was deeply grateful for the fact that the Latin-Americans seemed to know what a raven was. At that moment, she could not for the life of her have remembered the Spanish equivalent!

Then, quite unexpectedly, she saw that Anne-Marie was looking at her. The ordinarily sad eyes of the girl from the concentration camp were luminous with affection. They were luminous with affection for her, Mary Willing! "Hour teacher his so sweet for hus!" Anne-Marie was saying. "She 'elp hus so much! She his never hat the hend hof patience!"

"She 'ave the warm 'eart," contributed little, tempestuous Carmen.

"Hi hinterest myself much to Henglish,"

added Sister Marie Christophe. "We 'ave good teacher."

Suddenly they were all talking at once—the impetuous Latins, the milder French, the ordinarily silent and undemonstrative little Pole. They were telling her eagerly—in Spanish, French, German, and somewhat garbled English—that they were grateful to her, Mary Willing, for her patient effort on their behalf. They were telling her that they were fond of her! She felt that at any moment she would burst into tears! Why, she, who had been reared according to the precepts of staid and

temperate German-Americanism, was as emotional as the Latin-Americans! She rejoiced in the discovery. For the first time, she had a sense of warm kinship with the South Americans, the Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Guatemalans, and Mexicans!

She held up her hand, unable to speak.

"Thank you, my dears!" she said at long last. Then, as the bell rang, she added softly, "Thank you for making this such a happy, such a very beautiful morning!"

ANNE JENNINGS

Webster College

Announcement

The Central States Modern Language Association will hold its Annual Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri on May 2-3.

Ten Years of Aural-Oral Teaching of Languages at Arlington State College

ALL language courses taught at Arlington State College have a primary goal of aural-oral proficiency in the language of the student's choice, a secondary goal of reading proficiency, and a tertiary goal of grammatical knowledge, all in keeping with the latest trends in teaching methods used by The University of Texas, Yale University, Middlebury College and others of the nation's outstanding colleges and universities.¹ This system of instruction, detailed below, is felt to be in keeping with the traditions of Arlington State College in that the end result sought for is a practical one. The Department does not feel that the cultural advantages inherent in language study are thereby neglected, but, rather that any system of language instruction will produce cultural benefit to the student without regard to the particular methods of teaching employed.

The equipment used by the Department as teaching aids consists of wire and disc recorders, phonographs, and unbreakable records manufactured by companies which supply the colleges and universities named above.² These records are recorded with the voices of native speakers of the various languages taught. Their pronunciation and accent are, of course, criteria to be desired. Duplicate sets of the records used are on reserve in the college library where they are available day and night with the use of the library's own phonographs. It has been found that students have made considerable and effective use of these facilities in the library.³ Students are required during each semester to make recordings of their own voices as they read a selected bit of prose in the language of their choice. They retain the records made as their personal property and can use them to study mistakes and speech defects, as well as to receive encouragement from their evident progress semester by semester.

First semester courses in the four languages

taught by the Department are an introduction to the sounds and modulation of the respective languages.⁴ Much time is spent teaching the students accurate and facile pronunciation as the first, indispensable step toward comprehension and competence in self-expression. The records are the same, and methods are substantially the same as those used by professors at The University of Texas and other colleges and universities aforementioned. It is observed that this method of instruction is, of necessity, more flexible as well as more demanding of the professor's ability and energy than in-the-rut traditional methods of reading-course grammar-book teaching.⁵

Students are required to memorize considerable amounts of sentences as they appear in conversational form on the records. In this manner they learn phrases and sentences which are complete thoughts as their basic vocabulary, rather than isolated words and idioms. Any person who has ever studied any foreign language will immediately recall the difficulties attendant upon learning long, disjointed lists of nouns, verbs, idioms and grammatical rules and, we believe, will find it credible that the experience of the Department has been that the memorization of complete sentences has resulted in students obtaining a degree of aural-oral proficiency in the languages they have chosen not possible under traditional teaching methods. In passing, it is observed that a competent reading knowledge of most foreign lan-

¹ See page 85 of the February, 1950 issue of the *Modern Language Journal* for analysis and comparison of aural-oral approach to language instruction.

² Henry Holt & Co., N. Y.; Houghton Mifflin Co., N. Y.; Linguaphone Institute, N. Y.

³ The Arlington librarian recently observed to Department members that student use of the records has shown an increase this year—evidently as students have come to realize the value of the records as study aids.

⁴ French, German, Spanish, and Russian.

⁵ Page 139, *Modern Language Journal*, February, 1951.

guages requires a vocabulary of from fifteen to twenty thousand words, whereas reasonable and effective fluency in speaking ability is possible with a vocabulary of from eight hundred to twelve hundred words—even less with some languages such as Russian.

Just as at The University of Texas, instruction in grammar is held at a reduced status during the first year of each language. During the second semester more attention is directed to grammatical problems as the students' broadened foundation and interest influence them to seek out more of the purely physical structure of the language. When one considers the fact that many natives of the United States speak English without having more than a smattering of knowledge of English grammar, it becomes an evident waste of time to teach students all of the tenses in, for example, French when even educated Frenchmen often do not use many of the compound tenses. For this reason, teaching of grammar at Arlington State College is governed by the students' needs rather than by the basic pedagogical urge "to give them the works."

Intermediate and second year courses continue further study of language records, but emphasize the study of grammar and composition in one semester, and reading and conversation in another semester.

An exhaustive survey of the aims and objectives of modern language teaching with particular reference to the aural-oral approach as used at Arlington State College is reported in the *Modern Language Journal* issue referred to in footnote no. 1 above. This research was conducted under the able direction of Professors Ernest T. Hadan and D. Lee Hamilton at The University of Texas. This committee developed a number of tentative propositions which, though obviously not intended to represent final conclusions based on their observations and experience, appear to favor the use of the aural-oral teaching method. The tentative conclusions follow: 1. "Listening sessions seem to be of considerable value. The student gains

by hearing and repeating the material he has assigned for study." 2. . . . "Emphasis on formal grammar . . . is of very doubtful profit, at least in the first year. Since so much time is usually spent on grammar in the first year, it follows that an appreciable fraction of the first year might more profitably be spent on some thing else."⁶

As Arlington State College is a Junior College whose students ultimately transfer to various senior colleges to obtain their college degrees, it may be of interest to the reader to know the results of an investigation conducted in 1947 for the express purpose of determining how students of the department have fared upon transfer to other colleges. The results of this investigation were embodied in a report submitted to the President of Arlington State College, Dr. E. H. Hereford. This report, emanating from the various colleges and universities contacted throughout the area definitely established that Arlington State College foreign language students were completely successful in meeting the competition of students trained in colleges using traditional methods of teaching with primary emphasis upon grammar and reading rather than upon aural-oral proficiency.

Arlington State College has been a pioneer in the use of the aural-oral approach to language teaching through the extensive use of phonograph recordings. This system of teaching the living language has resulted in a substantial increase of enrollment in the language department at A.S.C. The Department attributes this increase directly to the heightened interest in language caused by a consistent presentation of the aural-oral approach to language instruction over a ten-year period.

A. E. FREELAND
C. E. HAYDON

*North Texas Agricultural College
Arlington, Texas*

⁶ The experience of this Department over a period of ten years devoted to aural-oral teaching is that the latter statement is, at least, quite conservative.

Crossword Puzzle for an Hors-D'Oeuvre

WHAT follows is prompted by Mr. Palleska's commendable article "Bread, and not Stone." (MLJ Febr. 1951).

"The side-shows, the hors-d'oeuvres, are the things that stay with the youngsters the longest," says Mr. Palleska, "and it behooves us to strike out courageously into new methods. . . ."

To Mr. Palleska's list of magazines, recordings, maps, etc. now being already used to a greater or less extent in classrooms, I should like to add a new teaching device, the crossword puzzle.

Several years ago, while my class was struggling with Russian numerals, I offered them a crossword puzzle containing all types of numerals in different grammatical cases. The idea worked. Their interest was aroused. The bitter pill was sweetened. The forms stuck.

My further experiments in offering puzzles occasionally in classes at Stanford University and the University of Colorado,—where the response of students was highly gratifying,—have convinced me that this new teaching aid may have a popular appeal.

The crossword puzzles seem to stimulate the students' interest, and they certainly benefit by using the dictionary looking for the words they do not know.

Thus was born the idea of making a book of puzzles, each covering the words pertaining to a certain subject.

A long convalescent period made it possible for me to realize my idea and to complete the work on forty-two puzzles dealing with the following subjects:

Animals	History, politics	Professions
Antonyms	Human body	Relatives
Art	Materials	Religion
Birds, fish, insects	Meals	Russian Christian names
Clothing	Military	
Colors	Minerals, metals	Months and days
Dwellings	Nationalities, countries	School
Farming	Nature	Sport
Furniture	People	Time
Geography	Plants	Weather, seasons
		Travel

Grammar			
Adverbs, prepositions	Diminutives	Soft sign	
Aspects	Imperative	Sibilants	
Degree of comparison	Irregular plural	Verbs of motion	
	Numerals	Verbs of posture	
	Prefixes		

On the average, seventy per cent of the words in each puzzle relate to the theme. The others are either 1) common useful words of high frequency, 2) borrowed foreign words such as "atom," "act," "bank," "football," or 3) proper names like "Yalta," "Lenin," etc.

Instead of definitions, English words are given in the columns "Across" and "Down," to be translated into Russian and written into the proper space of the diagram.

But just as English puzzle-makers have such scape-goats as "asp," "spa," "Ra," "Lear," I could not avoid repeating some words. However, mine,—I may say,—are more plausible ones. "Oka" and "Kama," the tributaries of Volga, may become well known rivers to American students.

But alas!—The Shakespearean king also pops out every once in a while (to their great relief).

My latest addition to the puzzles is hundred and ninety Russian proverbs. Each puzzle is accompanied by four or five carefully selected proverbs or rhymed bywords, pertaining to the subject of the puzzle.

Thus, the following proverbs added to the puzzle on the Imperative are to illustrate imperative endings for different types of verbs.

- "Make friends with a bear but hang onto your gun."
- "Live and learn."
- "Don't rush with your tongue; hasten with your work."
- "Don't pour into my ears; put in my hands."

The proverbs on numerals show the cardinal, ordinal and collective numerals, and case endings of the same numeral.

- "Seven do not wait for one."
- "Seven misdeeds—one reckoning." (In for penny, in for pound.)
- "With seven nursemaids the child loses its eye." (Too many cooks spoil the broth.)

"Habit is a second nature."

"Have not a hundred roubles, but have a hundred friends."

They also show that Russians seem to like things in sevens (quite the opposite of English, as one of my students remarked, where it is not desirable to have things "at sixes and sevens").

The irregular forms of the degrees of comparison are featured in the following proverbs:

"A bad peace is better than a good quarrel."

"Truth is brighter than the sun."

"The farther into the forest, the more wood."

"A fish looks for a deeper place, a man—for a better one."

The verbs of motion are presented in:

"Good rumor stands, bad travels."

"Misfortunes never come singly."

"You cannot carry water in a sieve."

"If you love sledding, love to pull your own sled."

The family would include the words for relatives:

"Vodka is aunt to wine."

"When a mother-in-law comes into the house—every thing is topsy-turvy. (At sixes and sevens.)"

"Laziness is the mother of all vices."

"The homely child is beautiful to its parents."

Farmer's philosophy of life is reflected in "Farming:"

"As they sow, so shall they reap."

"One with a plough, seven with a spoon."

"The deeper you plough, the more bread you will see."

"Either a bundle of hay, or a pitchfork in your side."

(Gain all or lose all.)

Cities of Russia and the peasant's pride in them are found in "Geography":

"He who has not been to Moscow has not seen beauty."

"You don't go to Tula with your own samovar." (To carry coals to Newcastle.)

"Your tongue will take you to Kiev."

For Minerals and Metals the proverbs are:

"Slander is like coal: it may not burn, but it will besmirch."

"Not all is gold that glitters."

"Strike the iron while it's hot."

"A diamond glitters even in mud."

For Plants:

"No rose without thorns."

"A berry of the same field." (Birds of feather.)

"An apple does not fall far from the apple tree." (Like father, like son.)

"A popular saying is a little flower; a maxim—a little berry."

For Professions and Trades:

"No carpenter without an axe; no tailor without a needle."

"Hunger is the best cook. (Appetite is the best sauce.)"

"Every man is the smith of his lot."

"The job fears the craftsman."

"It's bad when a cobbler starts to bake pies and a baker to make shoes."

For School:

"Eggs don't teach the hen."

"Learning is light; ignorance is darkness."

"Necessity will teach everything." ("Is the mother of invention.")

"One learned is worth of two unlearned."

For Religion:

"Where there is love there is God."

"Every man for himself and God—for us all."

"God is not in power, but in justice."

"No threshold without God."

For Sport and Recreation:

"What is play to a cat is grief to a mouse."

"A day for work—an hour for play."

"Work done—play freely."

"The game is not worth the candle."

For Time:

"Morning is wiser than evening."

"Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day."

"Those who are happy don't watch the clock."

"It's a long day if there is nothing to do."

For Travel:

"The slower you drive—the farther you go."

"A large ship needs deep water."

"He who walks is no companion for him who rides."

"Visiting is good, but home is better." (East or West—home is the best.)

As a supplement to the puzzle the proverbs repeat the words given in the puzzle, or add a few new ones relating to the subject in question.

Outside of this technical role, they have a definite cultural value as a delightful form of folk literature. They possess melody, wit, rhythm and reflect patterns of Russian thought. They present Russian views and natural wisdom in the condensed form of a verse, easy to memorize.

The reminiscences of the past historical events which are in the proverbs, are added to the puzzle on History:

"An unbidden guest is worse than a tartar." (Tartar's yoke.)

"Perished like a Swede at Poltava." (The year of 1709)

when Charles XII of Sweden lost his battle to the Russians.)

"A hungry Frenchman welcomes a crow." (The year 1813 when French soldiers were compelled to eat crows during Napoleon's retreat from Moscow.)

"The Russian frost pinches the German nose." (Second World War.)

As entertainment, the crossword puzzle has a strong attraction, stirs the student's imagination, arouses his curiosity.

Why not use them for an educational purpose?

The crossword puzzle may serve as:

- 1) optional assignment for a vocabulary review;

2) a test after a group of words on a certain subject has been learned;

3) a new way of getting grammatical point across;

4) a review in a follow-up course;

5) a contest in word recognition in a language club. The purposeful game holds the student's interest. As a vocabulary builder and supplementary aid it is in harmony with the current tendency to encourage varied activities outside the classroom which promote the learning of languages.

NINA M. WIRÉN

*University of California
Los Angeles*

Prospective advertisers in *The Modern Language Journal* should write to the Business Manager, Mr. Stephen L. Pitcher, 7144 Washington Ave., St. Louis 5, Missouri.

Audio-Visual Aids

NEW FILMS

French

"La regle de jeu," 84 minutes duration. Written and directed by Jean Renoir. The story of an aristocratic society and the crazy, ruthless people in it who spend their time shooting birds and making love until pent-up jealousies and intrigues burst forth, and one of the men shoots another. Apply for rental rates: Trans-World Films, Inc., 64 East Jackson Blvd., Chicago. "The Count of Monte Cristo," starring Robert Donat and Elissa Landi, a reduction to 16mm of the famous Hollywood motion picture; "Son of Monte Cristo," starring Louis Hayward, Joan Bennett, and George Sanders, also a Hollywood film, both distributed by Commonwealth Pictures Corp., 723 Seventh Ave., N. Y. 19. To be seen soon: "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme," and "La Beauté du Diable," a Faust theme, directed by René Clair.

German

"Das Grosse Spiel," 8 reels, rental: \$35. Story of the great German love for sports and athletic events shown in a stadium. (Film Classic Exchange, 1645 N. LaBrea Ave., Hollywood 28, Cal.) "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik," c. 16 min. Mozart's music by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. (Wholesome Film Service, 20 Melrose St., Boston.) "Grimm Fairy Tales," 12 films, 1 reel each, narration in English, spoken by live actors. "Hansel and Gretel." 60 min. Color. New version of the familiar story, with live action and puppets. (Austin Productions, P.O. Box 713, Lima, Ohio)

Spanish

"Northwestern Mexico," Color, 11 min. Beautifully photographed film of lesser-known region of Mexico, Chihuahua and Sinaloa, designed especially for classes in geography, his-

tory, social studies, world affairs, land reclamation, agriculture. It is the first in a series of "The Earth and What it Grows." It is not a travelogue. (World Neighbor Films, P.O. Box 1527, Santa Barbara, Cal.) "How to Catch a Cold," 10 min. Color. Free loan. Produced by Walt Disney for International Cellucotton Products (Kleenex), will be available in Spanish dialogue free from Association Films, Inc., 35 W. 45th St., N. Y., or Cellucotton, 919 N. Michigan, Chicago.

Did you know: that "Bodas de sangre," based on García Lorca's play has been in existence for over a decade, made in Argentina? Or that *Facundo* is now being filmed right in the very heart of Facundo territory?

FRENCH VISUAL-AIDS REALIA: FREE

The following material is available free of charge from the Ambassadeur de France, 934 Fifth Ave., N. Y. (*not* Washington!): Maps of France, catalogues of French audio-visual materials, song sheets, list of color reproductions of French paintings, lectures on French painting and architecture, and other material.

RECORDS: LITTLE PEDRO AND THE STREET SINGERS

A set of two children's records, for ages 5-8, non-breakable and distributed by Children's Record Guild, 27 Thompson St., N. Y., for \$1 each. Little Pedro, acted by David Pfeffer, plays the role of a young boy whose mother is American and his father Latin American. He, therefore, is bilingual, acts as m. c. and commentator to a series of 8 charming Latin American folk and play game songs. "Little Pedro and the Street Singers" sings about making tortillas, the blacksmith, shoemaker, scissor grinder, and a cement mixer. Also a Mariachi orchestra plays and a circle game called Mattatero-tero-la is sung. The second record plays the very rhythmic songs Asserrín, asserrán,

Toro torogil, arre burrito, assí, así. Although the songs are supposed to be authentic Latin American, they ring a familiar note of American children's songs. Numerous Spanish words are sung throughout the songs: burrito, toro, zapato, sastre, sombrero, tortilla, etc. Excellent set for high school Spanish students.

TRAVEL POSTERS AND PHOTOS

The following government agencies will gladly send free available posters, travel literature and photos (especially if to be used to illustrate books: *German Tourist Information*

Office: 127 N. Dearborn St., Chicago; 11 W. 42nd St., N. Y. 18; 417 Market St., San Francisco. *Spanish Tourist Bureau*: 485 Madison Ave., N. Y. 22; 39 S. LaSalle St., Chicago 3; 68 Post St., San Francisco. *French Tourist Office*: 610 Fifth Ave., N. Y. or *French Line*: 610 Fifth Ave., N. Y. 20. *Italian State Tourist Office*: 21 East 51st St., N. Y. 22. *Cuban Tourist Commission*: 188 East 42nd St., N. Y. 17; or Box 1609 Havana, Cuba. *Dirección General de Turismo*: Ave. Juárez—89, Mexico City; 8 W. 51st St., N. Y.; 333 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago.

J.S.

Announcement

The Central States Modern Language Association will hold its Annual Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri on May 2-3.

Reviews

The Engelmann Heritage. The German-English Academy. The National German-American Teachers Seminary. Milwaukee, 1951, pp. 105. Price, \$2.00.

This is a centennial publication to honor the two institutions in Milwaukee named in the subtitles, which have made very substantial contributions to the training of teachers of German and to the cause of education in this country in general. In the wake of the 1848 immigration of educated Germans, the German-English Academy was founded in 1851 by Peter Engelmann, who was its first director until his death in 1874. It still exists as a high school, its name having been changed to Milwaukee University School in 1918. The National German-American Teachers' Seminary was established in 1878, not on a local basis, but through the concerted efforts of teachers of German all over the United States. The fact that it was located in Milwaukee reflects the nation-wide reputation which Engelmann's school had earned. The Seminary was one of the first institutions for teacher training in this country. Previously teachers had been poorly prepared, but around that time the influence of German teachers' seminaries became felt in this country, and the new school received its inspiration directly from the German models. It, in turn, became a model for American normal schools, which were beginning to spring up over the country. The Seminary closed its doors in 1919, because the demand for teachers of German had become too small after the hysteria of the first world war, but also because teacher training for other subjects could by then be obtained in many good schools, for the establishment of which the German-American Seminary can take some credit. The periodical for teachers of German, *Monatshefte*, published by the Seminary, gradually widened its range from language pedagogy to literature and language in general. In 1926 it was taken over by the University of Wisconsin, together with the Seminary's assets amounting to a quarter of a million dollars. Max Griesch, the last director of the Seminary (1904-1927; also director of the Academy, 1904-1925), became the first Seminary Professor of German in Madison (1927-1934).

The publication committee for the booklet, headed by Professor Frieda Voigt of the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, has painstakingly examined the records of the two schools and the various auxiliary organizations in order to present an account of their fates and achievements. It is a story of struggles against financial handicaps and all kinds of other difficulties, but also a story of idealism and unselfish devotion to the cause. The Milwaukee public museum, long a leader in modern methods of presentation, is revealed as another outgrowth of the Engelmann heritage. The committee has made it its concern to follow up the careers of faculty and graduates after they left the Sem-

inary. More than half the book is devoted to alphabetical records of their lives, the data having been obtained by a voluminous correspondence, with all the successes and frustrations which are bound to accompany such endeavors. It is interesting to see that many of the graduates passed over into the public school systems as teachers of German and of other subjects, that some went into business and the professions; while a respectable number became professors of German in the universities. Names of more than local interest in the rosters of faculty and graduates are, for example, Eiselmeyer, Roeseler, Prokosch, Purin, Hans and William Kurath. Among the donors appear such names as Blatz, Ottendorfer, Uihlein. The outstanding men connected with the schools are presented in brief personal sketches outlining their careers, activities, and personalities.

The little book can claim wider interest than the somewhat unfortunate title would lead one to expect. It presents an important chapter in the early history of modern language teaching in this country. It is obtainable at \$2.—from Mrs. Oscar Muenzer, 3438 North 14th Street, Milwaukee 6, Wis.

W. F. LEOPOLD

Northwestern University

THARP, JAMES B. and DELÉRY, SIMONE DE LA SOUCHERE, *La France en Louisiane*. Henry Holt and Company, New York 1951, pp. 187. Price, \$1.94.

—Que voulez-vous! Je suis Louisianais et comme tous les Louisianais, j'aime . . . le panache.

These are words which l'oncle Louis used in explaining to the young people in quest of France in Louisiana, the heritage which Louisianians received from their colonial governor, the Marquis de Vaudreuil. The latter taught the Louisianians to laugh in times of danger; and resort to pleasure and recreation when overwhelmed with personal grief or fear.

For this is not a mere travel book which the authors have written, but it is an attempt to translate into simple terms and in typical experiences the secret of a penetrating French influence which in Louisiana has survived the strain of historical events and the stress of recurrent immigration.

The young people Paul and Berthe Gouy during their visit to their New Orleans relatives are introduced to all the phases of Louisiana civilization; the history, the customs, the legends, the social activities.

The geography of the state is pleasantly noted in the trip up and down the river and along the many bayous, rich in fascinating names and exciting tales of pirates who plied the waters on their trip to and from the islands in the Gulf.

In every instance a name, a place, a literary reference, an historical precedent, notes the survival of France in this

section of America, so that the student who reads *La France en Louisiane* learns much of French history and civilization.

Beautiful photographs illustrate the text which is scientifically constructed for elementary language students.

The exercises test comprehension of the story content, and also afford material for additional discussion.

This book with increased range in the vocabulary and the grammatical difficulty, follows an earlier elementary French reader which also has to do with the influence of French culture in America. With 1710 different words used in the text the authors state that 1395 are in Tharp's *Basic French Vocabulary*. There is an INDEX TO PROPER NAMES; pronunciations are given in I.P.A. script here, as well as in the BASIC FRENCH VOCABULARY and SUPPLEMENTARY VOCABULARY.

La France en Louisiane should find a place on our early reading lists because of its interesting, cultural content and because of its scientific construction.

GLADYS ANNE RENSHAW

Newcomb College

POWYS, JOHN COWPER, *Rabelais*. Philosophical Library, New York, 1951, pp. 424. Price \$3.75.

There is certainly no dearth of biographies, criticisms, and interpretations of Rabelais in English and French, as well as in other languages. In Mr. Powys' work we have one of the latest to appear, and I am sure that it will appeal to all those interested in the great sixteenth-century author, whether or not they agree with his opinions and conclusions.

This book is divided into four parts and then further subdivided. After the Preface (pp. 7-26) comes the first part—*The Life of Rabelais* (pp. 29-90). Then we have the second—*The Story Told by Rabelais* (pp. 93-129), the third—*Selections Newly Translated* (pp. 133-379), and the last part—*An Interpretation of Rabelais* (pp. 283-416). The last part has two large subdivisions—*His Genius* (pp. 283-354) and *His Religion* (pp. 355-416). An index of persons and places mentioned (pp. 417-424) ends the book.

Mr. Powys adds little to what is already known or believed about Rabelais; he relies for his facts upon Abel Lefranc and Jean Plattard, but in Part IV he gives us what he believes to be the essentials of Rabelais' genius and religious beliefs; here again we find little that is new or not already accepted. However, he does interpret his subject for English readers in the light of works not read by most lay readers who cannot read French, and this is no small service. I am inclined to think that he perhaps puts too much stress upon the Celtic influence in *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*, but I am sure that there are those who would not share my opinion. The book is certainly not easy reading and would not be easy to understand by one not already familiar with Rabelais' writings. The translations are well done—perhaps better and closer to the original than any save those by Putnam in *The Portable Rabelais*.

This book should certainly go far in making the great Humanist better known to English readers and should dispel some of the erroneous opinions and illusions held about him. If it does that, it will have served its purpose well.

WM. MARION MILLER

Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

CRU, ALBERT L. and GUINARD, AUREA, *Le Français Moderne*, Livre I. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1951, pp. 402. Price, \$2.72.

Le Français Moderne, Livre I, is a useful elementary grammar, attractively presented, which purports to give equal emphasis to the "four objectives of language study—understanding, speaking, reading, and writing," with special care given to the spoken word, its pronunciation and comprehension. In each lesson the rules of grammar are clearly and simply explained in English, and there are ample exercises for drill in grammar and pronunciation.

The reading material in each chapter deals with everyday situations and provides a useful working vocabulary, although, as is so often the case in first-year texts, it is not particularly interesting. At the end of the book, however, there is a special reading section dealing with France, history, geography, and civilization, and throughout the text there are a number of songs which the student should find pleasant and stimulating.

This book should prove satisfactory as a first-year text. Its only notable weakness is a certain diffuseness in the presentation of the grammatical material. Important points needed early in the study of French, such as simple relative pronouns, the position of personal pronoun objects, and the negative imperative are given too far along in the text.

The vocabulary is more than adequate for a first-year text, but the book would have been improved if related idioms had been presented in a more compact form.

YVONNE L. LABRECQUE

Oxford School, West Hartford, Conn.

CRU, ALBERT L. and GUINARD, AUREA, *Le Français Moderne*, Livre II. Illustrated by Barry Bart. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1951, pp. 466. Price, \$3.20.

In reviewing *Le Français Moderne*, Livre II, what strikes immediately is its clearness, its simplicity in spite of its thoroughness, and its practicability.

The book is divided into thirty chapters, followed by an extensive reading unit based on Alexandre Dumas' *Le Comte de Monte Cristo*, data on French civilization, an appendix on phonetics and verbs, vocabularies and index.

Each chapter is divided into three distinct units: the vocabulary, the grammar, and the verb. Each lesson begins with an intensive reading unit. These stories, most of which are by well-known writers, are well chosen to stimulate the student's interest and give him a good background of French culture. The arrangement of the notes, following immediately the reading selections to avoid wasteful thumbing, is good.

The authors have done especially well with the vocabulary. The abundant exercises, carefully correlated with the texts, and broad in word relationship, are excellent. There is a wealth of expressions which are gone over several times in exercises of gradual difficulty.

There is abundant opportunity for the many devices of Direct Method teaching, as well as for practice in conversation.

The grammar sections, with their very effective presentation, as well as the verb section, afford a wealth of drills

and practice in the use of grammatical principles. Review material is abundant (every five chapters).

The civilization section is also well equipped with excellent drills which will attract the student's interest by their modern features.

The drawings by Barry Bart which illustrate the book are excellent, but perhaps not numerous enough, in the reviewer's opinion, in the Civilization part. More charming pictures on the order of that of "Le Palais Royal, Paris," on page 395, would have added charm and interest to this section.

The publisher has done well by the volume. The print is large and very clear, the exercises are not cramped, and ample space is provided between the different sentences of the exercises.

One misprint has come to the reviewer's notice; on page 231: "... que vous l'accompagniez."

Le Français Moderne, Livre II, may be highly recommended for high-school use, as it provides abundantly for all college-entrance requirements. I feel sure that all students and teachers who use this fine book will benefit greatly by it and feel grateful.

YVONNE LE HÉNAFF TÉVIS

Dwight School
Englewood, New Jersey

WELLICK, SUSANNE, *Paul et Marie à l'École*. Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, New York, 1950, pp. 207. Price, \$2.50.

The text may be suitable for young students thoroughly accustomed to the direct method as used in its predecessor (*Rire et Apprendre*), but since it is meant for children "ten years and up," it seems to be rather over-ambitious in its aims, whatever they may be specifically (there is no preface or explanation to prospective teachers other than a dust-jacket blurb). A French child might profitably use the book as it is presented, but it seems probable that most American students young enough to enjoy the sort of stories and pictures offered would find the acquisition of a new set of grammar rules and terms (at an age when their knowledge of their own language is generally superficial) a burdensome task. It is true that both grammar and vocabulary are explained in part by pictures, but such visual aids are frequently more confusing than helpful.

Although the tone of the stories indicates that they are addressed to young children, the vocabulary is extensive and is not repeated alphabetically at the back of the book; there is no index, and the table of contents does not indicate which chapters contain the treatment of specific points of grammar. Any sort of planned review work would be rather difficult unless the teacher made his own reference index.

Paul et Marie à l'École is printed in large, clear type and is generously and vivaciously illustrated. It may be an entertaining text, but because of the lack of usual guides may tend to discourage the average student of pre-high-school age.

The direct method will probably always have its adherents, and this text, skilfully used, will induce students to think in French. But it could be used only by students who had been successfully exposed to a considerable amount of "direct method" teaching.

YVONNE L. LABRECQUE

Oxford School, West Hartford, Conn.

SCHNEDIER, HEINRICH, *Lessing. Zwölf biographische Studien*. A. Francke A. G. Verlag, Bern, 1951, 312 pp.

From the Introduction we are led to expect the presentation of significant new discoveries of a biographical nature that may lead to important re-appraisals of Lessing and his work. However, aside from the initial two chapters, which reproduce with comment a few newly discovered letters and "Gespräche," the only chapters in this volume that are likely to be of some value to the specialist are the excellent sections: "Lessing und das Ehepaar Reiske (Chapter VI), "Lessing und die Freimaurer" (Chapter VII), the second half of the essay "Lessing's Interesse an Amerika und die amerikanische Miss Sara Sampson" (Chapter VIII; there is, incidentally, no connection between the first and second half of this unit), and "Lessing's letzte Prosaschrift" (Chapter IX). The remaining essays, while interesting and at times pleasantly informative as to discreet biographical detail, can scarcely be said to have important literary implications.

Thus, while it is gratifying to learn that, despite frequent assertions to the contrary, Lessing was both an able and conscientious library administrator ("Lessing's bibliothekarische Arbeit"—Chapter IV), this is not likely to lead to a re-evaluation of the critic's work. And the same is true of the remaining "revelations." Chapter III, "Lessing in Wolfenbüttel," gives interesting though scarcely invaluable detail of certain personal aspects of Lessing's life. Chapter V, "Werther-Jerusalem als Freund Lessings," presents principally a discussion of the character of Jerusalem. Chapter X, "Eva Lessing in Wien," affords a clearer picture than usually available, of some of the obstacles that so long delayed the marriage of Lessing and his betrothed. Chapter XI, "Lessing und Freund Hein," reproduces Schneider's short journalistic composition on Lessing's relation to death. And Chapter XII, "Lessingbildnisse und ihre Maler," gives a detailed account of the extant reproductions and the circumstances under which they came into being.

Thus, though this volume is not the significant contribution to Lessing literature that both the author and publisher suggest, it is in sufficient measure an interesting and valuable supplementary study. And while we share the author's stated regret at his having offered largely a series of older, re-worked essays rather than an integrated monograph, our disappointment is tempered by the satisfaction of finding here in attractive form the positive results of much earnest endeavor.

ERNST KOCH

Brooklyn College

GREEN, F. C., *Anthologie des conteurs du dix-neuvième siècle*. Cambridge University Press, London and New York, 1951, pp. 238. Price, \$1.75.

In his preliminary editorial note, Mr. F. C. Green, Drapers Professor of French at the University of Cambridge, states that the chief purpose of this selection is to present an "interesting and representative assortment of nineteenth-century French short stories." After all, "we remember only what really stimulates and holds our interest." Furthermore, although the selection is designed pri-

marily for schools and colleges, it is intended also for "readers, whatever their age, whose enjoyment of French literature is so often exasperatingly interrupted by the intrusion of some elusive word or idiom."

There is no small amount of genial wisdom in these introductory remarks, and one can not fail to be impressed by the modesty of the intentions. It is a pleasure to report that the resulting work not only more than adequately satisfies the requirements which Professor Green set for himself but also reflects good taste in the choice of the material and considerable skill in the editing. The selection contains examples which are of definite literary value, thus fulfilling the promise inherent in the word *anthologie*. It also goes without saying that the range is considerable since the entire nineteenth century is being encompassed.

We begin with Mérimée's never-too-familiar *Tamango* and end with a delightfully irreverent story from Verlaine, entitled *L'Obsesseur*. Balzac's *Épisode sous la Terreur*, Vigny's *Laurette ou le cachet rouge* and Musset's *Histoire d'un merle blanc* will perhaps have been encountered before, but no one will dispute their rightful place in these pages. Nodier's *L'Homme et la fourmi* constitutes the fifth story; then comes Gerard de Nerval's *Émilie*, a choice which should please even the most demanding reader. Edmond About's *Gorgon* is so malicious and riotous as to suggest the possibility of adapting it as a scenario for the modern screen. It is true that the Erckmann-Chatrian combination, represented by *La Comète*, is completely outclassed by the fellow contestants of the anthology. This reviewer would even have preferred eliminating their story except for the fact that the Alsatian setting with its Germanic overtones does serve to emphasize and enhance the fantastic element. From this point of view we agree with Professor Green that a representative collection of nineteenth-century French stories should include such an example, especially since Charles Nodier has been limited to his rather special exercise in rewriting Genesis. Daudet's classic *L'Elixir du révèrend père Gaucher* needs no defense whatsoever and is coupled with another story highly seasoned by the Southern temperament. Here is a work entitled *La Mort de Pan* from the pen of Daudet's collaborator and friend, Paul Arène. As if to counterbalance this ebullience, there follows Renan's haunting, tragic story of the *Broyeur de lin*. Maupassant's eminence in this particular literary form is illustrated by the eight pages which contain *Denis*. Professor Green chose for the penultimate selection Villier de l'Isle-Adam's little masterpiece, *La Torture par l'espérance*. The transition from the tension created by Villier's agoniz-

ing tale to the sophistication of Verlaine's conversational bit of foolery comes as a welcome relief and pleasant final note. We feel, that Professor Green has chosen works which not only are highly readable but will impress and stimulate. They are good enough to inspire the students to read other works by the same authors.

All of this excellent material is presented with a minimum of editing. Instead of a vocabulary in the appendix there is a series of notes occurring at the bottom of the page. The more difficult items of vocabulary as well as the more elusive constructions are translated with conciseness and accuracy. Professor Green is aiming at the advanced student and manages to co-relate these marginal aids to the knowledge of someone who is already able to read French with ease.

The biographical sketches and the comments on the works of the respective authors are restrained and well done. The editor says just enough about the writer to elicit some interest on the part of the reader. It is true that he has not always been explicit in stating just where the particular illustrative story fits into the works as a whole. We might, for instance, wish to know that the *Épisode sous la Terreur* belongs to the *Scènes de la vie politique* or that the *Filles du feu* has more than just the three stories which Professor Green mentions. Even the *Broyeur de lin* is only indirectly connected to the *Souvenirs de jeunesse et d'enfance* in the editor's preface. We might also pause to dispute the literary evaluation which slights *Une Vie* and lists *Pierre et Jean* and *Bel Ami* as Maupassant's only novels of first-rate quality. But these are merely very slight objections to the commendable material which Professor Green has written for his anthology. Lastly this reviewer detected only one error in the text (p. 113, line 5 wherein "que" should read "qui").

This little volume seems particularly well adapted for use in the usual third-year college course designed as a survey of French literature. That it is also suitable for a course on the short story is only too obvious. The variety of styles, the several examples of irony in the best French tradition, the extreme range from the fantastic to the tender, the macabre to the salacious, all these are qualities which derive from the collection. Concerning the readers who enjoy literature, it should be a case where the forementioned students and this privileged leisure class close ranks.

WILLIAM V. HOFFMAN

Northwestern University